J. M. DENT & SONS LTD.
Aldine House · Bedford St. · London

Printed in Great Britain
by
Billing & Sons Ltd. · Guildford · Surrey
for
J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.

First Published in England by J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd.,
and in America by The Macmillan Co., New York

I. The Middle Ages and the Renascence	1926
II. Modern Times	1927
Revised and Reset Two Volumes in One	1930
Further Revised and Reissued at a Cheaper Price	1933
Reprinted with corrections	1934
Reset and Reprinted	1937
Reprinted with additional corrections	1940
Reprinted	1943, 1945
Reprinted with a Postscript	1947

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

tive and useful.' This modest way of putting things, howev. becoming in the writer, must not be stretched to cover ou gratitude. I remind myself that among the least pretentiou herbs of the field is a little plant of the family *Euphrasia* (or 'good cheer') of which country housewives brew a lotion for tired or ageing vision. Their grandmothers gave it the happy name Eyebright—and I have tested its virtue. Even so medicinal have some of us English teachers found the surveys (to name no others) of M. Jusserand, M. Maurois, and MM. Legouis and Cazamian, in their various fields. For an instance, from the earliest pages of this book: Over more than a generation teachers of our literature on its native soil, enslaved by school-philology, exalted our Anglo-Saxon 'origins,' out of all proportion to our later literature. In revolt from this, some of us, as special pleaders for a livelier sense of the living word, went too far no doubt in challenging the pre-Chaucerian caskets of which the mere antiquity of dust deserved, of decency, a holier respect. M. Legouis's opening chapter had, of course, to deal with the subject; and it seemed to me, one of the disputants, that a natural fair-mindedness here reinforced an onlooker's proverbial advantage in seeing most of the game. The chapter proved of happy augury. As the reader went on, the qualities of fair judgment and disinterested enthusiasm persisted, with frequent flashes of insight as it were from an unexpected angle. These stimulate curiosity, and even when we find this or that writer thrown into a focus which our second thought obliges us to correct, still the stimulus has been valuable in compelling that second thought. No teacher of English literature would belittle such surveys as Chambers's *Cyclopaedia of English Literature* (three engrossing volumes, wherever opened), Courthope's *History of English Poetry*, Professor Elton's four volumes covering the century 1780–1880, or Saintsbury's smaller *Handbook*—to name but these out of many useful ones; nor that gallant series *Periods of European Literature* published by Messrs. Blackwood; while, for reference always, and often for entertainment, there is the great *Cambridge History of English Literature*, good at call. But the singular value of this present book as a manual for English students of university age, lies (as it seems to me) in its enlargement of the vision to see our own literature, magnificent as it is, in European perspective—and this not through direct comparison, but more winningly, almost insensibly, through the operation upon it of two

therefore pursued was that the English critics found in tl book a certain novelty; they considered that even in Ei lish it would not overlap with any other work, but would attractive and useful. Moreover, the authors' view of Engli. literature is that of outsiders, who are indeed fervent admire. of its strength and splendour, but yet have an independenc of mind due to their foreign training, to the fact that they hav not inherited nor been nurtured on this literature, but have approached it consciously and of deliberate choice, as men rather than as children; and their judgments may in consequence have an added impartiality, their praise more weight. In these ways there is compensation for the inevitable inferiority of a foreign historian, his lack of the instinctive, almost innate, love, which immediately affects the subconscious mind and may inspire the critic of his own nation's work with some such moving, profound epithet as reveals the race. Duly conscious as they are of this original taint, the authors were the more pleased when they found their conception of English literature to be far from unacceptable to British minds. The agreement seems to them proof that the friendly effort they have made to penetrate the mysteries of an intellectual nationality, and to share it in so far as outsiders may, has not been entirely in vain.

It is true that the generous reception accorded to this book does not stand in isolation. French study of English literature has had no more valuable encouragement than the benevolent interest with which it has been followed in England during the ast half-century and especially during the last thirty years. t is encouragement justly bestowed considering, merit apart, ıe lack of prejudice and the fervour, even enthusiasm, with hich English is now studied in France.

Although the production of theses for the doctorate was turally hindered for a time by the War of 1914–18, those sting already deal with all the various periods of English rature from the beginning to the present day. Among e of which the subjects are general, we find *The Feeling for ire in Anglo-Saxon Poetry, The English Masques of the scence, The English Public and English Men of Letters in ighteenth Century, The Social and Literary History of the of Bath, English Poets and the French Revol ogical Novel in England in the Midd fluence of Science on it, Social*

A HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

The Middle Ages and the Renascence
(650–1660)

By ÉMILE LEGOUIS

Translated from the French by
HELEN DOUGLAS IRVINE

Modern Times
(1660–1947)

By LOUIS CAZAMIAN

Translated from the French by
W. D. MacINNES, M.A., *and* THE AUTHOR

REVISED EDITION

LONDON
J. M. DENT AND SONS LTD.

English literature. Italian and French were never quite weaned of their maternal Latin, but Anglo-Saxon literature, when the first great literary works of the fourteenth century appeared, was not only dead, but also unknown; its documents had been buried deep; they were written in a language which had become unintelligible, and could therefore exert no possible influence. The true unity of a literature is constituted by the persistence of a language which remains fairly intelligible from one age to another, and by the succeeding and more or less active influences, sometimes manifest and sometimes hidden, but none the less continuous, of the works which are literary landmarks. If this be so, Anglo-Saxon literature cannot be an integral part of English literature. It has rightly no other relation to English literature than the life of his father or mother has to the life of the hero of a biography.

It is the prologue rather than the first chapter of the book. Yet this prologue happens here to be indispensable. For if the Latin antecedents of Romance literatures are deposited in Latin literature, Anglo-Saxon literature is too slender and too special to have, at least for Frenchmen, its special place. Its most natural place is at the approach to English literature, its mere descendant, yet a descendant having certain derived characteristics and certain deep feelings which cannot be well understood until their germ has been descried in Anglo-Saxon works. Thus the right of Anglo-Saxon literature to open a history of English literature is again established, together with the justice of the term Anglo-Saxon.

2. *Anglo-Saxon Literature is not a Direct Expression of the Pagan Age.*—The Anglo-Saxon literature which has reached us is, on the whole, the work of clerks who lived from the seventh to the eleventh century. If they did not create all of it, they preserved it all. It is therefore an essentially Christian literature. The editors allowed nothing to survive which seemed to them to conflict formally with their religion. Hence came a vast elimination of which we cannot even conjecture :he importance. Hence also arose modifications and amplifi-ations of such of the old legends as were not sacrificed, changes 'hich gave them an edifying turn certainly not theirs originally. It is among these clerks that we must first place ourselves understand not only the pages which emanated from them ·ectly, but also the character and tone of the older fragments ich they spared.

.et us go back to the end of the seventh century. The

English literature. Italian and French were never weaned of their maternal Latin, but Anglo-Saxon litera when the first great literary works of the fourteenth cen appeared, was not only dead, but also unknown; its docum had been buried deep; they were written in a language wh had become unintelligible, and could therefore exert no possi influence. The true unity of a literature is constituted by t persistence of a language which remains fairly intelligible fro one age to another, and by the succeeding and more or le active influences, sometimes manifest and sometimes hidden but none the less continuous, of the works which are literary landmarks. If this be so, Anglo-Saxon literature cannot be an integral part of English literature. It has rightly no other relation to English literature than the life of his father or mother has to the life of the hero of a biography.

It is the prologue rather than the first chapter of the book. Yet this prologue happens here to be indispensable. For if the Latin antecedents of Romance literatures are deposited in Latin literature, Anglo-Saxon literature is too slender and too special to have, at least for Frenchmen, its special place. Its most natural place is at the approach to English literature, its mere descendant, yet a descendant having certain derived characteristics and certain deep feelings which cannot be well understood until their germ has been descried in Anglo-Saxon works. Thus the right of Anglo-Saxon literature to open a history of English literature is again established, together with the justice of the term Anglo-Saxon.

2. *Anglo-Saxon Literature is not a Direct Expression of the Pagan Age.*—The Anglo-Saxon literature which has reached us is, on the whole, the work of clerks who lived from the seventh to the eleventh century. If they did not create all of it, they preserved it all. It is therefore an essentially Christian literature. The editors allowed nothing to survive which seemed to them to conflict formally with their religion. Hence came a vast elimination of which we cannot even conjecture the importance. Hence also arose modifications and amplifications of such of the old legends as were not sacrificed, changes which gave them an edifying turn certainly not theirs originally.

It is among these clerks that we must first place ourselves to understand not only the pages which emanated from them directly, but also the character and tone of the older fragments which they spared.

Let us go back to the end of the seventh century. The

PREFACE

Some little while ago a number of English professors in our various universities and university colleges discovered a common indebtedness to Émile Legouis (no honorifics can improve a name now so eminent) and a common impulse to thank him; an impulse, that is, of personal gratitude, warming and colouring the respect due to the achievement of a great scholar.

Viewed dispassionately, of course, that achievement were

France. Now so massive is our literature that the mere task

following pages bear witness.

They would have done *beneficently*, too, had their success

and of Bede, in the story of our civilization France and Britain have borrowed from one another and Europe from both, with a mutual benefit that should dwarf all jealousy; we can scarcely overpraise MM. Legouis and Cazamian for their primary purpose here fulfilled.

But they have had a secondary success, in our gain. M.

they pursued was that the English critics found in their book a certain novelty; they considered that 'even in English it would not overlap with any other work, but would be attrac-

Bede, the Angles and Saxons underwent transformations compared to which all the revolutions of their later history, even the Norman Conquest, were trifling. They experienced migration and contact with a population of another race, the partially Romanized Celts, they relinquished a half-nomadic life for a life concentrated in fixed places, they exchanged war, misery, and famine for a state of relative peace and prosperity, and finally they underwent a deep and fervent mass conversion to Christianity, which disorganized the system of morals while it reformed it, which brought the clerks into communion with Latinity, and which severed most bonds with the still pagan Teutonic world.

During these convulsions, nearly every possible survival of primitive poetry was uprooted, together with the mythology on which it rested. The mythology of which Tacitus speaks, the gods Tuisco and Mannus, can and even should be forgotten by whoever wishes to understand *Beowulf*. The names of the deities had ceased, when *Beowulf* was written, to have interest for any one but a philologist, who might note the traces they had left in language, particularly in the names of the days of the week. The ancient rites had been totally submerged, save for some local practices or magic formulas or charms, which often had an alloy of Christian words, such survivals as folklore discovers to this day in the remote countrysides of Europe. Only traces of savage customs were to be observed, or such sporadic revivals of barbarism as the reigning code condemned. Everything derived from the barbaric past had been purified and ennobled, and also nervated, in an atmosphere of Christianity which already was almost one of chivalry.

It is no less dangerous to merge in a single whole Anglo-Saxon poetry and the poetry of the Scandinavians, or continental Germanic poetry where it was still pagan. The *belungenlieder*, although compiled at a later date, give, at st in the Hagen epic, a powerful picture of the warlike es and the atrocious vengeances of the earliest ages. hing like or approximating to them is to be found in the le body of Anglo-Saxon verse. Scandinavia and Iceland erved in the *Edda* and in their prose sagas abundant acteristics belonging to primitive beliefs and customs. ite of manifest likenesses of form and versification, some- amounting to identity, the content of their legends is treme contrast with Anglo-Saxon literature. In the

ment of words. This freedom of construction is to-day one of the points in the old language which astonish an Englishman. Its effect in poetry is to cause the place of words to be strictly governed by the needs of the alliterative line or the exigencies of emphasis. There is an abundance of separate, disconnected words in apposition, with something of the effect of superimposed interjections.

It is impossible, even in the most literal translation into an analytical language like English or French, to reproduce the staccato of these phrases without either introducing connecting links or becoming unintelligible. There is in the original a greater abruptness, a more interrupted sequence than that of which modern syntax allows.

3. Probably, however, no potentiality of the language had more influence on the rhetoric of the Anglo-Saxon poets than the ease with which it allowed them to make composites. This primitive tongue is poor in the grammatical suffixes and prefixes which transfer a word from one class to another, which make an adjective of a noun or a noun of a verb, or make two nouns into a new one, their separate meanings being lost in the process. The constituent elements of derivatives and composite words often remain clearly discernible and keep their distinct sense. Thus to crucify is to fasten to the cross, *rod-fæstnen*; a butcher is a slaughterer of cattle, *hrith-heawere*; the third finger is the ring finger, *hring-finger*; a literate man is one learned in letters, *stæfcræftig*. The passage from words in current use and employed in prose to the words which poets invent for a particular effect is unmarked, so that it is often difficult to determine which terms are strictly poetic. Alfred's prose gives us *æfter-genga*, or aftercomer, for successor; *ærend-gewrit*, or written message, for letter; *cynestol*, or king's seat, for throne; all words much like those composites which are found only among the poets—for instance, *eardstapa*, or earth-walker, for traveller; *breost-nett*, or breast-net, for corslet; *death-reced*, or death-chamber, for grave; *ban-hring*, or bone ring, for vertebra.

From language this process passed to thinking. Even when they were writing Latin, the Anglo-Saxons developed their ideas by means of accumulated periphrases. Their poets make an extensive use of this possibility of the language, and the peculiarity of their composite words is that they are used not of necessity, for lack of a simple equivalent, but as ornaments, to show a quality of the subject-matter and throw it into

critical
than o.
I may
publishers, who have ventured to compress the original two volumes of this work into one of over 1,400 pages, well printed on opaque paper, yet easily handled and to be had for half the original cost.)

To resume, however: If criticism may be offered by one who admires this work the more through some acquaintance with the mass of its difficulties overcome, I feel that here and there in the second part (where, as we approach the present day, the material accumulates enormously while he who
to quote in support of
een forced back upon
to overstrain it somewhat; that he is driven to classify our authors by 'movements' and 'tendencies' rather than by individual merit, even as his predecessor M. Taine generalized them by 'environment' Now movements and environments are facts, important facts, but for vital study of a vital literature by the young, some of whom (as the teacher hopes) are destined to perpetuate it, neither movements nor environments can challenge the actual and individual work of individual authors as the first main object of concern. And if this be true of any literary study, it is notably true of English, wherein genius has so often mated itself with eccentricity. For instance, Mrs. Radcliffe and 'Monk' Lewis exemplify a 'movement,' Landor and Peacock simply genius; yet who would compare the first pair with the second in any quality worth our concern? How

M. Cazamian's condensed pages on Blake. To revert to 'tendencies,' one can only congratulate M. Cazamian on his courage in essaying to extract some intention (let me not say 'drift') from the welter of our post-War poetry, fiction, biography. His is pioneer work, at any rate, and may be a reproach to some of us older men, who withhold our judgments (with our prejudices), simply trusting to youth, energy, the evident virtue of being alive, to what end soever tending.

ARTHUR QUILLER-COUCH.

1933

and lost among pious effusions, the opening lines ar energy:

With a bitter breast-care I have been abiding:
Many seats of sorrow in my ship have known!
Frightful was the whirl of waves when it was my part
Narrow watch at night to keep on my vessel's prow
When it rushed the rocks along. By the rigid cold
Fast my feet were pinched, fettered by the frost,
By the chains of cold. Care was sighing then
Hot my heart around; hunger rent to shreds within
Courage in me, me sea-wearied! This the man knows
He to whom it happens happiest on earth,
How I, carked with care, in the ice-cold sea,
Overwent the winter on my wander-ways,
All forlorn of happiness, all bereft of loving kinsmen,
Hung about with icicles; flew the hail in showers.
Nothing heard I there save the howling of the sea,
And the ice-chilled billow, 'whiles the crying of the swan!
All the glee I got me was the gannet's scream,
And the swoughing of the seal, 'stead of mirth of men;
'Stead of the mead-drinking, moaning of the sea-mew.[1]

Swiftly these memories are obliterated. The sailor soo wearies of the facile pleasures of towns. Spring brings bac to his heart the passion for adventure:

Trees rebloom with blossoms, burghs are fair again,
Winsome are the wide plains, and the world is gay—
All doth only challenge the impassioned heart
Of his courage to the voyage, whosoever thus bethinks him
O'er the ocean billows, far away to go.

And here the poet finds a strange and beautiful image to express this lure:

For behold, my thought hovers now above my heart;
O'er the surging flood of sea now my spirit flies,
O'er the homeland of the whale—hovers then afar
O'er the folding of the earth! Now again it flies to me,
Full of yearning, greedy! Yells that lonely flier;
Whets upon the whale-way irresistibly my heart;
O'er the storming of the seas.[1]

If it be impossible to follow all the truncated argument of *The Seafarer*, at least, through its mists, a powerful vision of polar seas and the fascination of their perils can be discerned. And this is something which persists in literature. This very passion for the sea and for adventure recurs in some great modern English poets—Byron, Swinburne, and Kipling—

[1] Stopford Brooke's translation.

CONTENTS

On the place of slaughter, wasted with wounds,
The boy in the battle. He durst not boast,
The grey-haired warrior, of the clash of swords,
The aged enemy. . .[1]

And the poem ends with the customary description of the field covered with the dead:

Behind them they let the corpses share
The dark-feathered fowl, the raven black,
The crooked-beaked, and the ashy-feathered,
White-tailed eagle enjoy the prey,
The greedy war-hawk, and the grey-clad beast,
The wolf in the wood.[1]

Some sixty years after the ode on the victory of Brunanburh, an unknown poet told the story of a national defeat, that of Maldon, in which, in 993, Byrhtnoth, the old chief of the East Saxons, met his death, as he strove to drive back a band of Northmen whose ships were coming up the Panta, a little to the north of the Thames. We have only a fragment of 325 lines of this poem, which seems, since it does not name a single one of the enemy, to have been written soon after the fight. It is not a lyrical song, but a detailed epic narrative which, by its rhythm and its general shape, recalls the battles of the *Iliad* more than does any other Anglo-Saxon poem. In spite of the extreme simplicity and the wholly national character of the poem, it provokes the question whether it be modelled on the classical epics. That poetry native to the country should, by mere chance, have attained to such a likeness to the classics seems incredible, and the surmise of imitation is tenable, since all Anglo-Saxon literature had been impregnated with Latin by the time this poem was written. But it must also be admitted that the copy, if such it be, is a very general one, and is drawn from a distance. The *Battle of Maldon* is no paraphrase of an ancient model. Its historical subject is local and quite recent. It is, in fact, the only extant fragment of a national epic of Anglo-Saxon.

The Saxons are Christians, repelling pagans, but all the noble sentiments in the poem refer to martial valour, love of battle, a leader's sacrifice of himself for his men, the loyalty of soldiers to their leader. Already the chivalrous point of honour is much to the fore. Out of his eagerness for battle, Byrhtnoth allows the Northmen to pass over the Panta in order that the fight may engage. When the Saxon chief is wounded to death,

[1] Translation by J. M. Garnett.

BOOK V

The End of the Renascence (1625-60)

PART II

BOOK I

Literature of the Restoration (1660–1702)

BOOK II

Classicism (1702–40)

BOOK III

The Survival of Classicism (1740–70)

The hostile meeting: never the healing tribe,
In the battle-place, might I find;
Who with plants my wounds would heal,
But to me the edges' sores become increas'd,
Through deadly stroke, by day and night.[1]

The riddle on a bull's horn, which can be both a trumpet and a cup, is rich and brilliant. There is first an armed warrior who is the bull, then a maiden 'with rings adorned' who 'fills my bosom,' says the horn, and then warriors

On horseback bear me; then with wind I must,
Resplendent, swell from someone's bosom. . .

When the riddle describes the elemental forces of nature it becomes really lyrical. The riddle on the Wind or the Storm (Riddle IV) is one of the most original and most modern of short Anglo-Saxon poems. It has been compared, without hyperbole, to Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, or rather to his *Cloud*, for in it the storm in exaltation chants its deeds and the changes it works. The storm is first represented as held, by the will of the Creator, chained and captive beneath the earth, powerless within its dungeon. Set free, it stirs up the waters of the sea:

Foamy strives wave against wall,
Dusk rises mountain o'er deep;
Dark on its track, in ocean,
Another goes so that they meet,
The land's limit near, the high shores.
There the wood[2] is loud, the ocean-guests' noise;
Still remain the rocky cliffs
From the watery strife, the crew's outcry.
When the towering mass on the cliffs presses,
There shall be hope for the vessel, in the fierce contest,
If it the sea shall bear, at that terrific time,
Of guests full, so that it shall forthwith
Be borne away, though vitally assail'd,
Yet foamy ride on the waves' backs.
There shall be some terror to men display'd.[3]

The clatter of the tempest on land, as it pursues its destructive path over cities and the dwellings of men, is painted on as grand a scale, although the drawing is more confused and obscure.

Here, the subject—the terror of the hurricane—and the necessary repetition of identical violent effects, combine to veil the habitual weaknesses of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Its

[1] B. Thorpe's translation of Riddle VI.
[2] i.e. the ship.
[3] B. Thorpe's translation.

BOOK IV

The pre-Romantic Period (1770–98)

BOOK V

The Romantic Period (1798–1832)

BOOK VI

The Search for Balance (1832–75)

BOOK VII

New Divergencies (1875–1940)

reaped abundant advantage has still to be noticed. The French trouvères have, not without reason, been reproached for monotony and long-windedness. But to turn to them from the scops is to be struck, perhaps equally, by the almost endless variety of their themes and their moods and by the large number of the works in which they have resisted the temptation to gossip, and successfully found for their conceptions an artistic frame, sometimes bare and severe, sometimes prettily decorated, but proportionate to their matter, so tha. subject and form are happily balanced.

After reading the chief Anglo-Saxon works, it is easy to imagine the surprise with which some Englishmen gradually learnt to know the fertile and artistic literary productions of their conquerors One has but to take the omnipresent, uniform alliterative line, which magnified all subjects alike, whether great or small, gave them all the same lyrical and epic tone, and to place it beside these varied French verses, ranging from the alexandrine to the monosyllabic line, beside their endless combinations of assonances and rhymes, which between the two extremes of the long *laisses* of the *chansons de geste* and the short, sparkling stanzas of the songs, run through the whole gamut of strophes, and are able, with their odd and even rhythms, to reproduce every step and gait, to translate the finest shades of feeling, from heroism to impertinent frivolity

There are, for instance, French lives of the saints, primitive poems, of which the *Life of Saint Alexis* is the noblest that remains. To whosoever has read some of the amorphous, tormented hagiology sung by the Anglo-Saxons, it is a surprise to come upon the calm stanzas on one assonance of *Saint Alexis*. From the first they give the impression that a new world has been entered, in which grave and deep religiou feeling is so allied to the simplest and surest art that the resu can only be called perfection. Every part of the story, eve corner of the picture, is, without effort, enclosed in a stan The story proceeds without hurry or jar Emotion seems be evoked not by the words, but by the details, that is, the fa which are presented without emphasis, in an order so lumu that it has the effect of the inevitable

In *Roland* it is the dash which is admirable. The long *la* the chained assonances of decasyllables, succeed each oth do the charges of the Frankish and Saracen knights interminable fight. If after each there is a pause, th

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The literature of the English language, one of the literatures richest in original beauty, is the most extensive ever known to the world. Literary production in the past and the present,

confined itself to the English literature of the British Isles, leaving to others both the literature of the United States and

because with unity of place.

This history was first written for the students of English

follow the reflection in books of the development of a great people. The authors had not the ambition to reach the English public, which was, they already knew, richly provided with histories of literature, both erudite and brilliant, ample or condensed, the productions of one or of several minds.

ideas, without which the French do not easily assimilate the matter they study. The unforeseen result of the method they

prevail for polysyllables, which were mainly derived from the French. Similarly, possession, formerly expressed by the genitive case, was expressed henceforth either by the genitive ending or by a preposition.

Anglo-Saxon, as a whole, was gradually simplified to modern English, a language of singularly few grammatical complications. Genders, arising out of the form of words or obscure and forgotten traditions, needed too delicate treatment to allow them to remain intact in a country of mixed population, and they were logically distributed according to sex, the neuter being reserved for all words in which there is no idea of sex. Only vestiges of the old grammar were left—the few present irregularities of the verb and the noun, and the genitive case, the only one which has survived. The article and the adjective became invariable. Pronouns and auxiliaries were introduced to mark in the verb persons and tenses which had been expressed by inflections.

Thus a regular syntax, in which inversion and ellipses were only exceptionally allowable, was introduced. The poetic language lost closeness, freedom, and some elements of the picturesque, but the language as a whole gained lucidity and precision.

The final result of these transformations was not felt until the sixteenth century. In the meanwhile inflections kept a semblance of life, the varied, sonorous vowels first giving place to a uniform *e*, often arbitrarily used, which was perceptible to the ear at the beginning of the period in question, but was swiftly tending to purely orthographic existence. Philologists give the name of Middle English to the language of this long period of transition.

We are not here concerned to describe the slow and deep-reaching evolution in detail, and must be content with a mere sketch, instead of a complete picture. At first, French and English naturally kept separate. The conquerors spoke French, the vanquished Anglo-Saxon, which lost the dignity of an official and of a literary language. French became the language of the court, the schools, and the law-courts, and, alternately with Latin, of the Church and of science. Its use spread among the burghers and among the landed gentry, who were largely Norman. It was only when they found themselves confined to Great Britain, after the loss of Normandy by John Lackland in 1204, that the conquerors began to pay any attention to the native language. Then it was

that insular patriotism was born in the Norman, now cut off from the Continent, and as his preoccupation with the people among whom he lived increased, he learnt their speech. The simplifications of English of which we have spoken, the sort of compromise effected between the two languages, made it possible for the two races to understand each other, more or less. The words which the Normans found most difficult, in meaning or pronunciation, were gradually dropped and replaced by their own words. The whole of the thirteenth century is filled with these changes, which were accomplished in silence and by degrees, and which were hallowed by the custom of the fourteenth century The Normans had, by this time, in great part abandoned French, and the native people had brought their language to a point at which it had lost the crabbed visage of its birthplace. Henceforth English reigned alone: in 1350 it took the place of French as the language of the schools; in 1362 it became that of the law-courts; and in 1399 it was used in Parliament for the first time by Henry IV. In the same period prosody, which for long had wavered between one and the other of the two traditions, attained to perfect balance with Chaucer, who combined respect for the native tones of his fellow-countrymen with obedience to the essential laws of French versification. Whatever be the individual merits of the poets who preceded Chaucer, they do no more than mark the steps to that honourable place where he is enthroned as the first great metrical writer of his country.

4. *Literature in English. The Religious Writers.*—A hundred years of complete silence followed the Norman Conquest and when a few writings in the native language reappeare towards the end of the twelfth century, they were mainl works of piety. To a disinherited people, no longer able read, the essential Word, which helps man to work out h salvation, had to be carried first. Homilies, sermons in pr and in verse, translation of the Psalms or parts of the Bi rules for a devout life, lives of the saints, and prayers—th fill the pages which form the mass of what may be ca English literature until about the middle of the fourtee century. They are at first almost the whole of this literat and they are its predominant part until this period e Inevitably, their only local element is language. As reg their matter, they are transcriptions, often literal, from l or French. If the passage of generations somewhat mo

More numerous are the monographs which have for subject Renascence writers, for instance, John Lyly, Ben Jonson, Milton, Marvell, or Herrick; or writers of the classical period, such as Locke, Defoe, Swift, James Thomson, Edward Young, ... pre-Romantics like ... properly so called ... Lamb, or the so different Jane Austen and Sydney Smith, or again the moderns —Ruskin, Meredith, Swinburne, Thomas Hardy.

To these works, which go deep, cover their whole subject, derive from sources directly, and often reveal new evidence or a new interpretation, which are erudite and yet aspire to a public beyond the initiate, English criticism has not been niggardly of approval. It has immediately admitted several of them to rank in their own sphere as classics, if the term may so be used, and has demanded and insisted that they should be translated into English.

Our list has dealt only with the theses, the immediate fruits of academic labour. It might well have included the works which the same authors have written freely, and also those individual books of wider reputation to which the English-speaking public have finely rendered homage, Taine's work in a former day and now those of J. J. Jusserand and André Chevrillon.

The work now presented to the British and American public was thus born in a propitious atmosphere. It is no summary of the studies enumerated above, for it aspires to more than the mere noting of results obtained in France. It cannot, therefore be said merely to focus the conclusions of earlier monographs. In its defects and its qualities it claims entire independence. Undoubtedly, however, its birth was encouraged by the ardent curiosity and sympathy which its subject aroused in France, and also, to a high degree, by the feeling that England herself looked favourably on French efforts to understand her mentality and interpret her literature.

E. L. L. C

The scene is well set: the picture of the flowery hedge in which the nightingale sings, and of the ancient, ivy-grown trunk on which sits the owl, is clear. The opponents are made to join issue cleverly. Later the fable does indeed unmask itself rather too completely. The adversaries evince a litigious acrimony, more appropriate to the law-courts than the woods. They are veritable litigants and forget too easily that they are birds. It is soon evident that the nightingale, with his voice 'of harpe and pipe,' stands for careless youth, the owl, with his mournful cry, for the wisdom of old age. Both are pious, but while the nightingale hymns a rapturous piety, thinking to win heaven with songs, the owl insists on the need for gravity, self-examination, and good works. The poet is inclined to side with the owl, but on the whole his dramatic impartiality is sufficiently indicated, and Master Nichole's verdict is left doubtful.

Although it has less lightness and charm, is harsher an heavier and more carefully moral, *The Owl and the Nightingal* is very like some pages of old French poetry. But this tim it seems that we are concerned with an original work. Th markedly iambic line, much accentuated and made up almost entirely of monosyllables, tends to diverge from the French while it imitates it. The metrical line is more robust and less fluent than its French models, more beset with consonants and poorer in vowels.

This poem, in the middle of the thirteenth century, was isolated, but in the early years of the next century the various forms of a poetry no longer exclusively religious or chivalrous were multiplied. With the fourteenth century the satirical spirit entered English in adaptations of the fabliaux, some of them so lively that they herald Chaucer. Such is the fable of *Dame Siriz, or the Weeping Bitch*,[1] in which a self-styled witch, a true Macette, favours a clerk's love-suit to a merchant's wife. The burgher woman is unmoved until the witch appears before her, leading a little bitch to whom she has given pepper and mustard to make it weep, and whom she declares to be her own daughter, metamorphosed for having rejected the advances of a clerk. Clerks are, she says, redoubtable persons. And the frightened burgher's wife thereupon lets her lover have his will of her.

Here disrespect for morals knows no restraint. Nor does it in the *Roman de Renart*; and it is with same mocking spirit

[1] G. H. McKnight, *Middle English Humorous Tales in Verse* (Boston, 1913).

LIST OF WORKS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PART I

THE history of English literature from the beginning to 1660 is traced in certain authoritative works, either entirely or almost entirely. To refer to them at the opening of each chapter would be wearisome. It has seemed better to give here a list of works which will not again be separately noticed unless they develop a particular point in a way not found elsewhere.

The Cambridge History of English Literature, 14 volumes (1907–16). The first seven volumes go down to 1660. Each volume contains excellent bibliographies.

Henry Morley, *English Writers*, 11 volumes (1887–95). This work ends about 1616, at Shakespeare's death.

W. J. Courthope, *A History of English Poetry*, 6 volumes. The first four volumes, published from 1895 to 1903, go down to the end of the seventeenth century.

Chambers's Cyclopaedia of English Literature, 1903 edition in 3 volumes. This is less a consecutive history than a collection of extracts. The first volume goes down to 1700.

B. Ten Brink, *Geschichte der englischen Literatur* (2nd edition revised by A. Brandl, 1st part 1899, 2nd part 1912. English translation of the first edition in Bohn's Standard Library in 3 volumes (1895- This incomplete work goes down to about 1550.

H. Taine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, 4 volumes (1864). The fi two volumes go down to the Restoration, 1660.

J. J. Jusserand, *Histoire littéraire du peuple anglais* (1st vol. 1896, 2n vol. 1904). This work stops at the end of the reign of James I 1625.

The development of the language and literature cannot be better followed than in the texts published by the Clarendon Press:

Sweet, *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*.
Morris and Skeat, *Specimens of Early English*. Vol. i, 1150–1300; vol. ii, 1298–1393.
W. W. Skeat, *Specimens of English Literature*, 1394–1578.
T. Hall, *Selection from Early Middle English*, 2 volumes (Oxford, 1920).

Biographies of authors will be found in the *Dictionary of Nati* *Biography*.

been more Anglicized: their spelling has grown English for the reason that the alliterative poets are generally less literate than the others, and use words not as they read them but as they hear them. Accent, in particular, gives an English character to the words of foreign root, for the initial tonic accent necessary to alliteration is imposed on them, instead of the final accent which was theirs originally and which rhyme emphasizes and preserves.

Yet it must not be thought that versification in these districts was unaffected by continental influences. If much verse was written, with even artificial correctness, on the Anglo-Saxon model, rejecting rhyme and excluding the stanza, there are also poems, like those of Laurence Minot, which are both rhymed and alliterative, and in which the lines are grouped either in irregular stanzas not unlike the *laisses* of the early French trouvères, sometimes followed by a short-line refrain, or in completely regular stanzas which observe the most minute rules of the fixed form of French poetry.

There is also a curious contrast between the form and the ubject of these verses. The Cædmonian line is revived for oems of chivalry, or allegories inspired by the *Roman de la ose*, or descriptions of customs which are plainly of a younger ge. But this form, even when it is an imitation, has the lvantage of giving the English poets an independence they ten lack when they have recourse to a metre copied from e French. The originality is chiefly perceptible in details style. Moreover, these alliterative poems, being really ovincial, often have a roughness which is of the people, arsh flavour of the soil, so that, for good or for evil, they very distinct from the poetry of the court.

he earliest in date of the alliterative poems is a fragment romance of the Holy Grail called *Joseph of Arimathie*,[1] based on a French story in prose which it condenses. It ires a certain originality from its vigour of language, cularly noticeable, as in Anglo-Saxon poems, in the narratives of war and battle. Three fragments have been preserved of a romance called *Alexander*,[2] which is connected with the romances of the ancient cycle.

The romance of *William of Palerne* or *William and the Werwolf*[3] has reached us in a complete state and its exact

[1] Ed. by Skeat for the Early English Text Society (xliv).

[2] Ed. by Skeat for the Early English Text Society (extra series, xxxi, xlvii)

[3] Ed. by Skeat for the Early English Text Society (extra series, i). Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. ii.

INTRODUCTION—PART I

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENASCENCE

(650–1660)

[illegible]

ences of presentment and even of method. It would be vain to deny that they are partly due to the different habits of thought of the two authors. Yet even had the whole book been written by one man, he would have been led, almost inevitably, to pursue a different method in treating of the past and of the present.

The past has been for many years the material of scholars. Its literary monuments follow each other less closely and are [illegible]

[illegible] question of breaking new ground. The historian's task is to [illegible]

new contribution to knowledge.

This, to particularize, is to say that every new French history of English literature must take into account two works, variously remarkable, among those which have in France been devoted to this subject. Taine's famous book, published in 1864, remains one of the most characteristic productions of this philosopher whose ideas left a profound imprint on the second half of the nineteenth century. The doctrine expressed in it, its brilliancy and vigour, and the author's reputation, will always find its readers, whatever progress time and the researches of scholars may bring to new histories of literature. It is desirable that Taine's luminous and

possessed could not but make his poem by turns vigorous and lofty. He had, too, such rude vital force and hearty irony that the scenes which animate his preaching are most intensely alive and full of movement

He was, however, entirely without the art of construction or arrangement. He loses himself, and us with him, in his labyrinthine allegories and pictures Confused even in the earliest version, his plan becomes more complicated and incoherent every time it is retouched, and to sketch the outline of the whole poem is almost impossible Even to indicate the subject of each of its different parts is difficult.

Disguised as a shepherd, the poet falls asleep one May morning in the Malvern Hills, and has a vision of a vast field full of folk—poor and rich, workers and idlers, nobles and burghers, bad clerks and jesters. The crowd swarms as in a thronged market-place, a contrast to Chaucer's peaceful picture of his pilgrims. It seems to the dreamer that Lady Holychurch appears to him amid this disorder, and tells him that the crowd is busied with things of the earth rather than things of heaven, that man's chief duty is to seek Truth, that Faith without works is nothing worth, that only love, otherwise Charity, leads to heaven

When the crowd of sinners, now repentant, wish to set ou : the sanctuary of Truth, no one knows the road, not even th ilmer who has lately visited the most famous shrines. W here ever a pilgrim who cared about Holy Truth? Th appears the person who names the poems, Piers Plowman.] fifty years he has served Truth by working, and from Conscie and Good Sense he has learnt the road. He offers to lead pilgrims, first describing the allegorical country through w the way lies The difficulties cause the most corrupt cowardly to turn back Then Piers announces that bef starts he must plough half an acre of land, and while h this he gives advice to the 'loveli ladies, with your fyngres' to sew chasubles, and obliges every one to fo example. Those who seek to escape their task are obedience by Hunger's rough handling In its f poem ends here with the poet's awakening, cl peroration on the small value of papal pardons an efficacy, at the Last Judgment, of an upright life

Within this frame there are, however, two almo episodes which are longer than itself and uncon each other They are moralities in narrative

LIST OF WORKS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PART I

The history of English literature from the beginning to 1660 is traced certain authoritative works, either entirely or almost entirely. To ref to them at the opening of each chapter would be wearisome. It ha seemed better to give here a list of works which will not again b separately noticed unless they develop a particular point in a way no ound elsewhere.

he Cambridge History of English Literature, 14 volumes (1907–16). The first seven volumes go down to 1660. Each volume contains excellent bibliographies.

enry Morley, *English Writers*, 11 volumes (1887–95). This work ends about 1616, at Shakespeare's death.

J. Courthope, *A History of English Poetry*, 6 volumes. The first four volumes, published from 1895 to 1903, go down to the end of the seventeenth century.

mbers's Cyclopaedia of English Literature, 1903 edition in 3 volumes. This is less a consecutive history than a collection of extracts. The first volume goes down to 1700.

en Brink, *Geschichte der englischen Literatur* (2nd edition revised by A. Brandl, 1st part 1899, 2nd part 1912. English translation of the irst edition in Bohn's Standard Library in 3 volumes (1895–6). his incomplete work goes down to about 1550.

ine, *Histoire de la littérature anglaise*, 4 volumes (1864). The first ro volumes go down to the Restoration, 1660.

usserand, *Histoire littéraire du peuple anglais* (1st vol. 1896, 2nd vol. 1904). This work stops at the end of the reign of James I, 1625.

The development of the language and literature cannot be better followed than in the texts published by the Clarendon Press:

Sweet, *An Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse*.

Morris and Skeat, *Specimens of Early English*. Vol. i, 1150–1300; vol. ii, 1298–1393.

W. W. Skeat, *Specimens of English Literature*, 1394–1578.

T. Hall, *Selection from Early Middle English*, 2 volumes (Oxford, 1920).

Biographies of authors will be found in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

to grumble that he should have to enhance the beauty of deserted women and vilify their seducers It seemed to ı that this was not reality, and even his books revealed to h certain faults in some of the heroines who were the set obje of his praises — Cleopatra, for instance, and Medea. T outcome was that this poem also was not finished. The tas imposed by the queen became an intolerable penance, and ther is not a doubt that Chaucer was right to leave it for *The Canterbury Tales*. Yet the legends, incomplete as they are, contain exquisite passages, and moreover they did Chaucer the service of taking him away from allegory—only the prologue of this poem is allegorical—and inducing him to tell, after the ancient masters, some imperishable tales of love and grief Now translating and now adapting, Chaucer was able to give a personal turn to these famous themes He has not Ovid's brilliant rhetoric, but there is an advantage in the artlessness of his style. He is both less witty and more feeling than his model. This poem is the last he wrote before the *Tales* and it leads to them directly. It is, further, in this poem that Chaucer first used the ten-syllabled rhyming couplet to which he returned in his masterpiece

4. *Chaucer under Italian Influence. 'The Knight's Tale' 'Troylus and Criseyde.'*—Taken as a whole, all the poems which have been mentioned are in the French succession But the three last, written after Chaucer's first journey to Italy in 1372, show numerous traces of the influence of Italian poetry. He was immediately sensitive to the genius of the great Italians whose works he knew at least in part—Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. From them, better than from the too distant poets of antiquity, he learnt to enrich his line which was still a little slight, to find more glowing images and more impassioned themes The influence which these three poets had on him was, however, very unequal He was, without doubt, fully conscious of the greatness of Dante, whom he calls the 'gret poet of Itaile,' but he was no less aware of the difference between his own genius and that of the sublime visionary. As we have seen, he banteringly refuses to follow Dante to the regions of the air, and he borrows from him only ery sparingly. It is when, in 'The Monk's Tale,' he tells the ory of Ugolino, that he comes nearest to emulating him, and en he transforms the terror of the scene so that it becomes uching. Fear does not render Chaucer's Ugolino speechless leave him dry-eyed when he knows himself condemned to

INTRODUCTION—PART I

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENASCENCE

(650–1660)

ences of presentment and even of method. It would be vain to deny that they are partly due to the different habits of thought of the two authors Yet even had the whole book been written by one man, he would have been led, almost inevitably, to pursue a different method in treating of the past and of the present.

The past has been for many years the material of scholars Its literary monuments follow each other less closely and are

new contribution to knowledge.

This, to particularize, is to say that every new French

1864, remains one of the most characteristic productions of this philosopher whose ideas left a profound imprint on the second half of the nineteenth century. The doctrine expressed in it, its brilliancy and vigour, and the author's reputation, will always find its readers, whatever progress time and the researches of scholars may bring to new histories of literature. It is desirable that Taine's luminous and

pretended French translation which was really a n romance, and of which Douglas says that, although had called it 'Virgil in Eneados,'

> It has na thing ado tharwith, God wait,
> Ne na mair lyke than the devill and Sanct Austyne

Douglas aimed at translating exactly, word for word, but for comprehension and the imperfection of his language c led him to render one word or one line by several. He ret something of the Middle Ages and travesties characters, when he makes a nun of the Sibyl or a gentle lord of Aeneas

He translates into heroic couplets in which he uses mc licence than in his other poems. Altogether this is a interesting work, energetic and sometimes brilliant.

Its most curious part is the prologues which precede th books. These contain the most original and most Scottish verses of the poet. In them Douglas writes as his fancy bids him, of himself or of the season. In a description of winter which begins the seventh book, and one of spring which opens the twelfth, he may be said to have anticipated by two centuries his fellow-countrymen Thomson, of *The Seasons*, for he is as faithful to nature and prodigal of detail. His exuberance s especially striking, his abundant colours, scents, and sounds. le is like a Dunbar striving for realism. But in the long run his scene is felt to be crowded, mind wearies and eyes ache. His language is, moreover, the most difficult of the period, because of the number of the learned and popular sources whence it derives. An Englishman is unable and a Scot hardly able to read Douglas without a glossary.

In his prologues he allows himself full rein, for he writes them only for his own pleasure. In that to Book XII[1] he would merely have us know how the singing of the birds woke him at four in the morning and he resumed his translating. Sometimes his readers share the diversions of a humanist, as when he adds to Virgil a thirteenth book translated from the talian Maffeo Vegio. Its prologue informs us that in a dream he writer is charged by Vegio to make this translation. He first refuses, pleading unfitness, but Vegio insists that he o has translated the poem of a pagan is far more bound to this service to a Christian, and finally the Italian poet vails by the argument of twenty blows with a cudgel. hese particularities of his Virgil show, almost as much as

[1] Printed in Skeat, *Specimens* vol. iii.

enthralling book should continue to introduce the English to French criticism, and there is no danger that oblivion will overtake this, one of the master achievements of an exceptional mind.

More recently M. Jusserand returned to the same subject in his *Histoire littéraire du peuple anglais*, of which the first volume appeared in 1896 and the second in 1904. His work was conceived on quite other lines than Taine's. An historian first of all, whose scholarship was such that he had made numerous discoveries and closely discussed many special problems, he painted with the greatest accuracy and picturesqueness England as she is revealed by her writers. To attempt to do over again what he has accomplished to such perfection would be no less vain than presumptuous.

These two works have, the one of them mainly and the other exclusively, the same subject as the first part of the present book. Taine, writing seventy-five years ago, could not know the history which is contemporary for the men of our day. Moreover his picture, full enough for the earlier periods, leaves gaps with increasing boldness from the eighteenth century onwards. Thenceforward he supplies rather a series of brilliant articles than a complete, closely written, and continuous story. As for M. Jusserand, his history stops before Milton, about 1625.

The duty of him who travels the country crossed by these pioneers is surely not to follow in their footsteps, but to seek, as much as possible, the paths they have explored least willingly, the points of view which have most seldom been theirs. There is no occasion to attempt, after Taine, to rear an imposing determinist construction, to deduce, from categorical assertions on race, conditions, and clime, both the general characteristics of English literature and the special marks of the writers who made it. Against Taine's seductive and imperious theory strong objections have been raised, principally in the introduction to Auguste Angellier's *Robert Burns* (*Les Œuvres*, vol. ii). To restate it in its entirety is no longer possible, and to revise it would change what is and should be a calm and free exposition of known facts into a long controversy. On the other hand, all who seek mainly to conjure up for themselves the manners, the institutions, and the life of the past, may be referred to the learned and vivid pages of M. Jusserand's work, simply because it exists and admirably fulfils its author's purpose.

What seems not indeed to have been omitted, but to have

making, for memory altered, modified, or suppressed, and new circumstances suggested opportune additions. Oral tradition changed the form of the poem Like money in circulation, it lost, little by little, its imprint; its salient curves were blunted; and long use gave it a polish it did not have originally. The exact fact to which it owed its birth grew misty in retrospect, and form being, in a humble way, historical, the ballad became romantic and acquired the prestige of the remote.

Perhaps, therefore, it is time rather than the mode of their making which gives ballads their special character. They differ from other poems because we never, or hardly ever, hear them as they were originally. At some moment of its life, already, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public knowledge, and the subtle effect of the human emotions excited while it has been endlessly repeated may indeed have given it the value of a collective work.

It may be said that this is equally true of the old songs which were not written down for many years. But a ballad is not a song Usually it holds a story. It is the fragment of an epic; sometimes it is plainly the summary of old chivalrous poems of which only the essence has been kept for the purposes of a short recitation and to make a rapid impression on simple minds. Or else the ballad relates for a district a glorious or ill-omened incident which is known to all and has familiar heroes, so that, however allusively the poet expresses himself, he is sure of being understood even by the most ignorant.

The ballad exists everywhere in Europe, but is most copious and lively in the outlying regions, in Spain in the south and in Scandinavia in the north. Great Britain, insular and isolated, produced many ballads, especially on the Border, the scene in old days of so many sanguinary encounters of Scots and English

We have spoken of the popular rhymes, dating from the fourteenth century, on Robin Hood, bowman and outlaw, but the ballads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated to his exploits do not go back further than the sixteenth century. While the existence of numerous ballads in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there are only two which can certainly be placed before the Renascence: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid*

Chevy Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii

been given a secondary place in both these histories, is the aesthetic aspect of their subject, and by divergence from them in this respect an essential task may be accomplished. It can be neither idle nor ill-timed to endeavour before all else in a history of literature to show the earliest signs, the early gropings, the progress and retrogression and the triumphs of the artistic sense. To this end the study of form is quite as important as that of thought or even feeling. The evolution of language, now slow, now quickened by a catastrophe of history, the formation or deformation of metre, the hardly

nor suffer itself to be detained by them for long, and it reserves
the s
cant
it is
value has been supplied. These remarks apply to the first part. The second, which follows its own method, has a separate introduction.

The translator deserves all thanks for the accomplishment of her difficult task. No less than her wide knowledge of English literature and most patient industry was required to find out all the hints and allusions to the original writings scattered without any direct reference throughout the French text.

E. L.

play; for instance one for paradise, one for the earth, and on for hell. Each included, beneath the stage, a room in which actors spent the intervals between their appearances and properties were kept.

The duration of the performances varied with the number of the plays, but was always several days In Chester, where the series included only twenty-four plays, it took three days The first nine were given on Whit-Monday, nine more on Whit-Tuesday, and the last six on the Wednesday.

What we know of the English theatre in the fifteenth century shows that it was very powerfully organized, that the gilds took an important part in its development, and that there was long local resistance to the engrossing of the plays by professional actors. In fact, its vitality and popularity were such as were surpassed nowhere. The number and diversity of the provincial centres, particularly in the north and the west, prove how widespread was the passion for the theatre.

Two points in which the English drama differed from the French must be noted In England, although all the plays of the period are generally called miracle plays, there are hardly any traces of what the French call *miracles*, that is, plays concerned especially with the Virgin and the saints, as distinguished from the *mysteries* which were founded on Holy Writ. All the cycles preserved in England are of scenes from the Bible. Secondly, the growth of the religious theatre was 'ess disturbed in England than in France, and its develop- nent checked less early It continued to flourish when the 'enascence was in full swing, so firmly was it established local custom and popular favour

The extant English cycles offer another advantage to dern students. While the French mysteries in the col- ion compiled by the Brothers Greban are, on the whole, iocre and monotonous, there is in the very various English a dignified emotion or a homely swing which sometimes s itself felt through the awkwardness and rudeness of yle. It may be said that these plays, in the form in they have reached us, prove that great artistic effort, real where it was mistaken, went to their making re almost all written in complicated and difficult which have the fault that they are apt to sacrifice quality to lyricism There are stanzas which their rhymes and unite lines different in measure—

INTRODUCTION—PART II

MODERN TIMES (1660–1937)

To pass on from the study of medieval and Renascen literature to that of modern times (1660–1937), is to meet wi lighter difficulties in some respects, and heavier in others. S many conditions of the problem are new that the very natu of the task is no longer the same. The case here is not one o superabundant authorities, but of scattered and insufficien guidance. On many points, and more and more as one proceeds, the necessary spadework is still wanting. While the matter to be dealt with is really, within a shorter compass of time, much more plentiful, fewer attempts have been made to survey and clarify it. Even the division into periods is far from being agreed upon. It was therefore inevitable, if some sort of order was to be evolved, that much should be ventured, as much indeed remained to be done.

Under these circumstances, the author has been anxious to select the most efficient principle for a classification. Warned by the example of Taine—a critic of genius, steeped in the spirit of a dogmatic philosophy—he has not sought to deduce the course of English literature from any number of exterior influences. Such a scheme of rigorous determination is no longer conceivable. However, the day has come, it seems, when the broad facts of literary history can be more closely connected not merely with physical or social agents, but with a moral one—namely, the development of the national mind itself. That a relation of this kind obtains always more or less, is admitted on all hands; but no explanatory ordering of the data could be thought of, so long as no definite elements were shown to reappear, in at least analogous forms, at the various stages of the psychological process. It is now possible to reckon with such elements, and to speak of recurrences in literature. The more searching analysis which has been effected of the movements in intellectual history, has brought out certain correspondences between equivalent terms. Those words, classicism, romanticism, and so forth, are seen to

clash with the religious sentiment. This is due to th ness of the comedy, which has neither reservations no It does not imperil the dignity of the play to which it b It is not destructive. It can be reconciled with fai tender emotion. It is at once bold and ... see that, for like reasons, th... or tragic elements in the b... the other hand, the cynic... *Maitre Patelin*, a fifteenth-century work, would be hard to imagine in a relig frame. *Maître Patelin*, with a theme somewhat analogou the Mak episode, is markedly superior to the artless Towne Play in refinement of analysis and pointed wit, but has fundamental harshness, a certain dryness and cruelty. N is the French play in any sense rustic: it does not breath the healthy country air which surrounds the shepherds o the *Nativity* and good-for-nothing, sheep-stealing Mak. In differences of this kind, rather than in a diversity of theory, the profound causes are to be discerned for the eventual triumph in English drama and rejection by French drama of the mingling of the tragic and the comic.

The earliest moralities preserved in England also belong to the fifteenth century. Later born than the mysteries, which are linked up with the epical period of the Middle Ages, the moralities are a product of the allegorical period. To the plays taken from the Bible, they are as is the *Roman de la Rose* to the old epics. For the characters of sacred history they substitute abstractions, vices or virtues. They are at their origin as much penetrated as the miracle plays with Christian teaching, but they have a more intellectual character. While a miracle play is essentially a spectacle, appealing primarily to the sight, a morality demands greater attention to the spoken word. Its text is more important than its scenery.

Although generally, as we pass from the miracle plays to the moralities, we seem to go from the greater to the less great, to what is less alive and more coldly and artificially constructed, the morality must none the less be recognized to mark a necessary stage and, in a sense, a considerable advance in the progress towards the modern drama. The author of a morality can arrange his subject freely, attempt construction and unity. He is led to analyse human quali-ties and defects, to emphasize psychological characteristics. Miserliness, for instance, cannot be presented without study

answer to distinct attitudes of the mind; and the transitions from one period to another show themselves as governed by a law of rhythmic change, the sway of which extends to most moral happenings.

From this point of view, it has proved possible to regard two centuries and a half of English literature as a succession

the age of Elizabeth.

The working out of this principle has allowed modern English literature to be presented in some sort of genetic order, and divided into periods, each of which really corresponds with a broad phase in the moral history of England; and with her social history as well, in so far as the facts of society and those of intellectual life offer a natural harmony. In consequence, not only has the field of literature been extended so as to include philosophy, theology, and the wider results of the sciences, whenever the expressions given them had awakened general interest; but the chapters within each period have been arranged so as to answer in principle, not the customary distinction between literary kinds, based on form, but the diverse aspects in the creative activities of writers, and thus the various psychological attitudes which these activities imply. The traditional separation between prose and poetry has therefore had very often to be ignored.

Although this method makes large demands upon the

remember, but to understand, may find in an orderly view of a vast number of facts. It is the author's hope that the disadvantages inseparable from such an effort may not be deemed so heavy as to condemn his attempt altogether.

Whatever its further aim may be, a history of literature must before all deal properly with writers who, if interesting, are more or less original; and with periods which, however similar to others, are more or less unique. No attempt to

whose jokes give the comic relief, while in *Hyckescor* scamp who names the piece plays malicious tricks w companions in debauchery, Free Will and Imagination

These moralities, by turns cold and scholastic or comi very mediocre degree, have little merit But another o same period is really impressive and might well be callec masterpiece of its kind, the play of *Everyman*.[1] For lon believed to have originated in Holland in Dutch as early as 1495 ... that t text. To-day, ... play was born ... ually it seems to ha been very popula ... to the Reformation.

The tragedy is that of Christian death, and it is staged wit poignant restraint and force God sends Death to summon Everyman, and he, in anguish, implores a respite, and obtains only a few hours to gather together the friends who shall go with him on his supreme journey. Everyman appeals vainly to Fellowship, his boon companion, to Kindred, and to Goods None of them will hearken to him Then he remembers Good Deeds, whom he has long abandoned, who is lying on the ground, weak and miserable, but who hears his prayer, helps him, and recommends him to her sister, Knowledge Knowledge sends him to Confession, and Everyman, shriven of sin, is ready to meet God At the moment at which he reaches the grave, Beauty, Strength, Discretion, and Five-Wits depart, in spite of their promise to follow him. Knowledge would go with him but cannot Only Good Deeds is left; she alone is not vain and will plead for him. Everyman dies pure of sin and forgiven

The conception is simple and enthralling There is here no classical influence, and yet nothing could be more classically constructed. The beauty of the work is its sincerity There is an inevitability in the subject In a sense, every dramatic work, whether ancient or modern, seems frivolous by the side of this essential tragedy. It has recently been revived in Great Britain and the United States and has made a profound impression on its audiences All the moralities, controversial in character, which followed *Everyman*, have something small and ephemeral as compared with it It would be a complete masterpiece were its form less naked, less dull, less devoid of brilliancy The artistic impulse seems wholly to

[1] Printed by F. Sidgwick (1902), by Pollard, in *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse* (1903), and by Farmer, Early English Drama Publications (1906)

classify tendencies and works, and explain the common elements in them, would be in the present case tolerable, unless it allowed free scope to the direct, unhampered study of ages, men, and artists. Earnest care has been taken here not to overstress the general at the expense of the particular. While a regular recurrence, with gradually shortening beats of the rhythm, is emphasized all through, no pains have been spared to throw light on the proper features of each period, the infusion of the present with an ever richer past producing results which are really ever new. Again, the individual temperaments of the authors have received the utmost attention, and the qualities of their art and language have been given the fullest consideration which the narrow limits of this study would allow.

Indeed, excessive compression, due to lack of space, is the greatest difficulty under which this part of the work has laboured. For not only is the volume of literary output larger in the modern period; the interrelation of literature with an increasingly complex moral and social life is itself growing more complex. The result is that many and cruel sacrifices have had to be made. No quotation could be thought of. Even the greatest writers have been studied on a reduced scale. All that concerns the lives and careers of authors has had, almost without exception, to be transferred to the corresponding footnotes, each of which aims at being in brief a biographical and bibliographical summary.

It need hardly be added that the study of the most recent period has proved extremely arduous, for obvious reasons; and that this portion of the survey can only be regarded as especially tentative. Though the chronological limit fixed upon is 1914, the progress of literature has been partly sketched until the after-War years.

The lists of authorities recommended for general consultation at the end of each chapter, and those which refer to each writer in particular, have been drawn up with a view, not to research work, but to the needs of the French student or cultivated reader, who wished to become better acquainted with a subject. That French books, merit being equal, should have been mentioned rather than foreign, as more accessible, was in such conditions unavoidable. Still, no other conscious discrimination has been used in their favour; and among the works quoted, those written in English, as would be expected, are far more numerous than those in all other languages put

temporal goods of the Church, the hierarchy, the the friars and the monks, but founds his argument reason. He puts natural law above Scripture and th ments. He has recourse only to logic and does not to the principle of authority.

To Wyclif and his disciples, who founded all their on Holy Writ, he retorted by invoking, as superior t Scriptures, 'the boke of lawe of kinde writen in mennis with the finger of God.' The words of Scripture ought says, to be 'interpretid and brought forto accorde with doom of resoun in thilk mater; and the doom of resoun oug not forto be expowned, glosid, interpretid and broughte fo accorde with the seid outward writing in Holi Scripture.'

To establish these principles in the vulgar tongue was those days to create a scandal among the orthodox, the ver class whom Pecock professed to champion. It was crimina to reason about religion with so much independence, to argue with heretics, to bring the people into these disputes by speaking to them in their own language.

Summoned to disown his book or go to the stake, Pecock chose disavowal, and not he, but his book, was burnt.

This logician, as intrepid as indiscreet, stands in isolation, and was afterwards mistaken by the Protestants for an adherent. He was understood neither by his own nor by the following century.

His prose shows a marked advance on that of his predecessors. He had clarity, the gift of choosing homely examples, and a wealth of words. His vocabulary was even excessive: drawing on its double source, English and French, he is tautological and redundant.

Sir John Fortescue[1] (1394?–1476?) was a lawyer who wrote mainly in Latin. Like Pecock, he based his arguments on the law of nature, for instance in his *De Natura Legis Naturae*, but his object is to establish the right to the throne of Henry VI, the grandson of the Lancastrian usurper. He premises that there are three kinds of government—absolute and monarchical, republican, constitutional and monarchical. The Lancastrians are legitimate kings because of the English constitution. Fortescue was the first to admire the constitution of his country, which he praises in his *De Laudibus Legum Angliae* (1468–70).

[1] *Sir John Fortescue, his Life and Works*, ed. Lord Clermont, 2 vols. (1869) *On the Governance of England*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1885).

English prose was still formless and indefinite, distributed among numerous local ways of speech, when in 1474 the first English printer began his work. William Caxton[1] (1421–91) has himself told how hampered he at first was by the anarchical state of his language. The unity constituted by the King's English in the fourteenth century had as yet been realized only in poetry. Evolution was, moreover, still in course, so that in his sixtieth year Caxton found the language very different from that spoken in his childhood. He asked himself how he could please every one To make himself more certain of being understood he sometimes places the French beside the English word, as *chasse* and *hunt* He wrote as he habitually spoke, avoiding too rustic terms, aiming at the comprehension of clerks and gentlemen, having his books revised by Master John Skelton, poet laureate of Oxford University. He thus succeeded in being intelligible, and he hardly went beyond this modest ideal. He is a mediocre translator, and the best of his prose occurs in his explanatory prefaces, in which he shows himself a good fellow and a man of cheerful disposition.

It is usual to number the discovery of printing among the auses of the Renascence By helping the spread of knowdge it certainly favoured the great literary revolution which as at hand. But it is possible, at least in England, to ask hether its first effects were not to fortify and prolong the ddle Ages. To draw up a list of the books issued from the glish printing-presses during almost fifty years is to cast up balance-sheet of the past It is barely possible to discern e and there in such a list, a book which heralds the new age axton himself had nothing of the humanist. He was a tish man, a member of the Mercers' Company, who at ty years old left England for the Low Countries He d in Bruges and there acted as a consul responsible for rading interests of his fellow-countrymen His stay in lers acquainted him with the most civilized court in rn Europe, that of the Dukes of Burgundy, to whose ions Flanders belonged In this court, although a ppetite for art and learning was manifest, letters were nined in the medieval frames It was with French

rologues and epilogues have been edited for the Early English Tex r J W B Crotch 1927 See W. Blades *The Life and Typography* Caxton, 2nd ed. (1882), E Gordon Duff, *William Caxton* (Chicag P. Plomer, *Caxton* (1925)

decided effect on poetry and prose. The national language was still immature. Prose lacked a strong tradition and glorious precedents, and the best humanists still made use of Latin. It is significant that the two books which appeared in England in this period and attained to European fame—Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) and Bacon's *Instauratio Magna* (1620)—were both written in Latin. As for verse, it had, since Chaucer, been irregularized, and it did not definitely regain equilibrium and measure until Spenser's work began in 1579: all the preceding years of the sixteenth century show no more than a series of incomplete experiments, ground which was won and then lost. In consequence, English literature had its flowering season when the magnificent Italian literature had already entered on its decadence, when France had produced Rabelais and Ronsard and his Pleiad, and Montaigne's essays were appearing. Malherbe was nine years old when Shakespeare was born. It was therefore in a generation enriched by all the substance of France and Italy that England realized for the first time her high literary ambitions.

Secondly, the Renascence held more aloof from the plastic arts in England than in Italy or even in France. The English Renascence occurred in a country which had no pictures or statues except those bought abroad, and in which the most determined reformers were zealously protesting against images. It had therefore a more inward and moral effect than the similar movements on the Continent. It reached its triumph not before, but after, the Reformation, when the Anglican religion had spread throughout the country and was beginning, here and there, to be tinged with Calvinism. In so far as the Renascence was an aspiration to every form of beauty and the cult of every kind of energy, it was not quite at ease in the already Puritan atmosphere breathed in this country. There were doubtless free spirits in England, but they were rebels and notorious. A morality which was sincere and natural in the majority had, on pain of obloquy, to be assumed by the others. The total result was increased eriousness, increasing pangs of conscience, less serenity, and ntensified passion in the matter of faith and conduct.

On the other hand, although the spread of Protestantism all ver England caused her to break with the Middle Ages more ecidedly than France and Italy, her literature remained more arly medieval than that of either of those countries. The t is the more striking because literature in the preceding

PART I

THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENASCENCE (*650–1660*)

hair shirt. This apostle of toleration was, as chancellor, a persecutor of the first Protestants and ended by dying a martyr to his faith. The contrast between his Utopia and his own life betrays a principle of unreality. The ideas of his book were on a level with his intelligence rather than deeply rooted in his conscience.

Yet this book cannot be called the unstable product of a youthful imagination. More was thirty-eight years old when he wrote it, and more than one of its pages contains reflections suggested by his practical experience as a lawyer and a member of Parliament. When he sees in the existing society 'a conspiracy of the rich against the poor,' he is not guilty of mere rhetoric. He supports his assertion by facts which are contemporary and English, the enclosures of land which were depopulating the countryside, especially in the south-east, the eviction of small tenants because rich landlords found that grazing farms were more profitable than their holdings. The lessened demand for workers on the land was causing great misery; so that 'even a beast's life seems enviable' as compared with that of a labourer. When More attacks the barbarous penal laws he is aiming a blow at the executions with which, as a lawyer, he was too familiar in a country where twenty criminals could be seen hanging from gallows in a row. He is the very antithesis of the judge Fortescue, who was proud of the bravery of English robbers. When he recommends houses of 'a gorgeous and gallant sort,' lit by glazed windows, he is thinking of the healthy and pleasant dwellings he had seen in Holland and comparing them with the dark, inconvenient, and miserable homes of London and England of his day.

This book is partly the work of a dreamer led by his fancy, a logician who systematizes his ideas. But it is also written by a satirist who attacks the errors and evils bequeathed by the Middle Ages. It is unlikely that More thought his conception could be realized in its entirety, but he very heartily wished to awaken the desire for certain necessary changes.

Utopia stands alone as representing England's literary contribution to pure humanism. Ten years after he wrote it More himself was drawn into the religious controversy, and was forced, whether he would or no, to abandon the sphere of intellectual exercises for that of narrow ecclesiastical quarrels in which he is next found.

from universal but solely from English history, but this effect of recrudescent patriotism cannot be called a literary innovation.

Sackville's *Induction*, written in the seven-line stanzas (*ababbcc*) beloved of Chaucer, takes us back to the vision and allegories of the *Roman de la Rose*. As a dark winter night is coming on, and the poet is mournfully reflecting on the miserable end of the great ones of the kingdom, and wishing he could describe them in order 'to warn the rest whom fortune left alive,' he sees approaching the sad shape of Sorrow, who offers to guide him to the realms of the dead, where he will hear their complaints Led by her, he sees at the gate Remorse, Dread, Revenge, Misery, Care, Sleep, Old Age, Malady, Famine, and War. He crosses the Acheron, passes near Cerberus, and enters the kingdom of Pluto, where, first of the fallen princes, the Duke of Buckingham comes to relate to him his woes

It is difficult to imagine a gloomier series of stanzas The darkness is uninterrupted, and it is this very excess of misery which constitutes the novelty of the poem. Never, since Dante's *Inferno*, had the Middle Ages conceived a vision so tensely and implacably sinister. A stronger brush was needed, a palette richer in sombre hues, a more solemn tone, than any which belonged to the trouvères. The best of those old verses, even Chaucer's, had a certain frailty. The language was too slight, the rhythm not sufficiently marked. But Sackville used an English which had contracted its grammar and dropped its terminations, and he re-established alternating accents more regularly than even Wyatt and Surrey Just because he wrote at a time when the accentual rhythm of verse was in process of being reconstituted, he exaggerated his scansion with a powerfully monotonous effect, which he further emphasized by repeated alliterations

The men of the Renascence who re-established rhythm were reoccupied by ancient metres. It was they who first used ie words iambus, trochee, and spondee to denote the com- nations of accentuated and unaccentuated syllables in their :s. Chaucer gave no thought to anything of the sort, but guided by ear alone, and escaped the more rigid laws rved by the earlier poets of the sixteenth century, or er such few of them as wished to restore metre Versifi- n wavered for some time between anarchy and excessive arity before it reached equilibrium. Sackville belongs small number faithful to scansion, and he hamm-

2. *The Reformation on the Stage. Lyndsay. John Bale.*—Very early, the Reformation attempted to take possession of the morality and use it for its own ends. Passion, inevitably unjust and sometimes brutal, gave life to more than one Protestant morality play. They appeared in the north and in the south. The first in date was written by the Scot Sir David Lyndsay, whose reforming zeal we have already seen.

His *Satire of the Thrie Estaitis*[1] was played in 1540 at Linlithgow before the King of Scotland, the bishops, and the people. It is as political as it is religious The three estates are the nobles, the clergy, and the merchants, and all three are pilloried together, censured for giving too much ear to Sensuality, Wantonness, and Deceit. The grievances which John the Common Weal, the man of the people, has against them are just enough, and it is pleasant to see him obtain the needed reforms with the help of Good Counsel and Correction.

Lyndsay's special attack is against the Church. Dame Veritie, who desires access to the king, finds her way barred by the lords spiritual, scared at her advent. An abbot wishes to cast her into prison, and a parson recommends that she be put to death, under cover of the king's momentary subjection to Dame Sensuality. The same priest summons Veritie to declare by what right she is addicted to preaching. He threatens her with the stake, and when she refuses to retract, Flattery, a monk, exclaims.

> Quat buik is that, harlot, into thy hand?
>   Out, walloway! this is the New Test'ment,
> In Englisch toung and printit in England.
>   Herisie, herisie! fire, fire! incontinent

In a comic interlude the social satire is dominant. Pauper recounts his misadventures. He used to keep his old father and mother by his labour and owned a mare and three cows. When his parents died the landlord took the mare as a heriot the vicar seized the best cow at his father's, and the secon best at his mother's, death The third cow went the same wa when his wife died of grief, when also the vicar's clerk bore the uppermost clothes of the family. There is nothing l for Pauper to do but to beg. The parish priest has refu him Easter communion because he no longer pays tit! He has only one farthing in his pocket with which to plead justice. A Pardoner arrives, boasting of his relics and sulting the New Testament, which sells to the injury c

[1] In Hamer's edition, see *supra*, p 218, n

lends itself to comic effects; the realism is not adulterated by borrowings from antiquity, and there is an unsurpassable drinking-song, 'Back and side go bare.'

(b) The Classical Influence. Tragedy.—But farces, even when they were divided into acts in the ancient manner, could not lead to dramatic progress. They had had a place in the miracle plays. The novelty was all in the isolation of the comic element. It was in tragedy that the national theatre and the theatre of antiquity came together most significantly.

Like the Italians and the French, the English were far more inspired by Seneca than by the Greek theatre.[1] He was a somewhat dangerous model, for his were oratorical tragedies, and it is a moot point whether they were written to be staged or to be declaimed. He used again the mythological themes of the Greeks, but used them, like a romantic, neither for their national sentiment nor because he believed in their legends, but for their brilliancy. He knew nothing of dramatic movement, and there is no action in his tragedies His characters rarely voice real sentiments: their speeches abound with maxims; their language is emphatic and lyrical, full of choice metaphors which show great force of oratory and real subtlety in analysis. Long monologues alternate with passages made up of short questions and answers, each crowded into a single line. Seneca's political allusions are frequent and he often attacks tyrants. Most of these characteristics recur in the work of his imitators, but what they have taken from him by preference is certain of his expedients, sometimes his choruses and more often the phantom who has the duty of explanation. Above all, they have been impressed by the atrocity of his subjects, and have learnt from him to associate the idea of tragedy with that of crime, nearly always monstrous crime. *Agamemnon* and the horrors of the Atrides, *Oedipus*, *Medea*, *Phaedra*, and, above all, *Thyestes* and the horrible banquet of Atreus, led to tragedies of atrocious vengeance like *Titus Andronicus* and *The Duchess of Malfi*

Five of Seneca's plays were separately translated and perhaps performed between 1559 and 1566, before the translation, published in 1581, of his *Ten Tragedies*. As early as 1562

[1] *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. v, Chap. IV, J W. Cunliffe *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy* (1893); F L. Lucas, *Seneca a* ... *abethan Tragedy* (1922); H B. Charlton, introduction to *The Poet* ... *illiam Alexander* (Manchester, 1921), T. S. Eliot, introduct ... *ies* (Tudor Translations, 1927), A H Witherspo ... *Elizabethan Drama* (New Haven, 192

BOOK I—ORIGINS (650–1350)

CHAPTER I

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE (650–1066)

1. *That Anglo-Saxon Literature is Distinct from English Literature.*—Until recently the English looked upon Chaucer as the father of their poetry. They discovered the earliest source of their literature in that fourteenth century in which, on British soil, the fusion of the Anglo-Saxons and the Franco-Normans was consummated To-day they trace their literary origins back to the seventh century. They give out that Cædmon and the unknown author of *Beowulf* were their first poets, and would go beyond these were it not that they lack older monuments. The stages and the motives of this recession in conquest of the past are curious.

From the time of the battle of Hastings in 1066 until the religious reformation of the sixteenth century, works prior to the Norman Conquest lay forgotten in cloisters where they were

ally for polemical reasons, they were concerned only with the religious and historical origins of the nation, or else with the characters of the language in which the documents were written, but gradually, after the charters and the books of devotion, old works of literature were explored, and some sort of collection of poets was made. The idea arose that a real national literature had flourished before the Norman invasion. There was, in the beginning, no thought of identifying it with English literature, properly so called, and it was known as

That the moral of the play may be the more distinct, and perhaps also that spectators unused to such heights of seriousness may be diverted, each act opens with a pantomime in which the lesson it conveys is illustrated.

This is therefore no mere academic tragedy. It is a work which stands first in a line of succession, the first unrelieved English tragedy and therefore the play which led to Kyd's *Spanish Tragedie*. It brought the idea of fatality on to the English stage. In spite of its great defects it established a high artistic level. Finally, it was the first play in which the blank verse formed under the influence of antiquity was used, [illegible] which Surrey had invented for his translation of [illegible] and Norton when they emulated Seneca, [illegible] but were incapable of giving [illegible] stage. Twenty-five years were to pass [illegible] tive was followed triumphantly. Their merit is that, [illegible] they did not reach success, they made the attempt.

(*c*) VARIOUS INFLUENCES.—*Gorboduc* was insignificant, but appeared in isolation. Round about this play there were many tentative efforts and importations from abroad, all of them pointing English drama along different paths. It has been possible to group several plays under the title 'Prodigal Son Series.'[1] This time the prototype was a work by a Neo-Latinist, the Dutchman Gnaphaeus whose *Acolastus* had been translated by John Palsgrave in 1540. He was imitated with great talent and with original additions in *Misogonus*, performed about 1560 The author, uncertainly identified as Thomas Richardes, wrote a strongly constructed and well-arranged play, enlivened by frankly comic scenes. The morality *Nice Wanton*, which appeared about 1560, connects with the same series and is a commentary on the adage 'Spare the rod and spoil the child.' In 1575 George Gascoign[illegible] produced his *Glass of Government*, imitated both from *Acolastu*[illegible] and from the *Rebels* of Macropedius

George Gascoigne, ever in quest of novelty, is the best witne[illegible] to the diversity of the influences operative at this time and the sources whence plays derived. Besides *The Glass of Gove*[illegible]*ment* he wrote *The Supposes*, a prose translation of a comedy [illegible] Ariosto, and *Jocasta*, a tragedy which purports to be a tra[illegible]tion from the *Phoenissae* of Euripides, but is in truth a rearr[illegible]ment of the Greek tragedy by the Italian Lodovico Dolc[illegible]

[1] See for this group *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. v, C[illegible]

contained a fabulous fauna and flora of great decorative valu to old tapestries, which seemed to Lyly marvellously adapted to illuminating his pages as he desired. He was not himself a believer in the unnatural nature he describes, but then his search was not for truth, only for decoration. It thus comes about that he makes current use of these fantastic fictions as terms of comparison, adding to them yet more singular inventions of his own. In spite of their extravagance and complete unreality, they serve to prove his statements. The discord between form and substance is the more striking because he poses as a moralist. Yet what shocks us to-day then gave pure enjoyment. Lyly's ingenuity was admired, and his followers were pleased that they could imitate him without much difficulty, so plain was the recipe for this style of mechanical graces. Subsequently, it is true that the word euphuism lost its exact meaning and became synonymous with every kind of affectation and preciosity. The epithet was stretched to include the various artifices of Sidney, Shakespeare, and Donne Yet we have but to open *Euphues* and read a single page in order to discover the distinctive characteristics of this special disease of language. It recurred, in a slightly milder form, in Lyly's plays, where it was sometimes a virtue, giving point to retorts and balance to dialogue.

2. *Sir Philip Sidney* (*1554–86*)[1] Lyly is a curiosity of literary history; Sidney and Spenser, his contemporaries, are great figures whose glory is still resplendent.

In his own generation Sidney successively enjoyed a personal and a literary prestige Nothing he wrote was printed in his lifetime, all being published posthumously, and he first constituted the complete type of a gentleman of culture He realized the chivalrous ideal retouched and perfected by the Renascence. In him the qualities of antique valour were combined with the new virtues for which humanism had created the need. He was not only the perfect knight, but also the lettered courtier, as Castiglione would have him be. But until some years after his death men did not learn that this Bayard had also been a Petrarch.

Of very high birth, a grandson of the Duke of Northumberland and nephew of the Earl of Leicester, brave, always ready to lay down his life, an accomplished horseman who had won

[1] Complete works, ed. by A. Feuillerat, 4 vols. (Cambridge, 1912–26). ives by Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1652, modern ed. by Nowell Smith, 07), and M. W. Wallace (Cambridge, 1915). See R. W. Zandvoort, *Sidney's cadia* (Amsterdam, 1929).

BOOK I—ORIGINS (650–1350)

CHAPTER I

ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE (650–1066)

1. *That Anglo-Saxon Literature is Distinct from English Literature.*—Until recently the English looked upon Chaucer as the father of their poetry. They discovered the earliest source of their literature in that fourteenth century in which, on British soil, the fusion of the Anglo-Saxons and the Franco-Normans was consummated. To-day they trace their literary origins back to the seventh century. They give out that Cædmon and the unknown author of *Beowulf* were their first poets, and would go beyond these were it not that they lack older monuments The stages and the motives of this recession in conquest of the past are curious.

From the time of the battle of Hastings in 1066 until the

religious and historical origins of the nation, or else with the characters of the language in which the documents were written, but gradually, after the charters and the books of devotion, old works of literature were explored, and some sort of collection of poets was made. The idea arose that a real

But this is above all a story of love and chivalry. Arcadia figures only as a background, and the peace of ... country is disturbed ... Basil... duce ... disgu ... who, court ... virtuous Pamela ... a woman ... The king is ... him, and ... with guilty ... consumed ... prince. The redoutable Amphialus is enamoured of Philoclea, and with the help of his mother, black-hearted Cecropia, he for long keeps the maidens captive and repels with the strength of his arms all attempts to set them free. But all Cecropia's sophistry fails before their purity of heart. Vainly she whispers cynical counsels to Philoclea, threatens her with death, has her whipped and her sister also, shows her a false vision of the beheading of Pamela that she may know her lot should she reject Amphialus. Love and virtue save the persecuted damsels. Finally, when Amphialus has been vanquished and slain, the beautiful loves of Musidorus and Pamela and of Pyrocles and Philoclea end in a double marriage.

This is the principal plot, but it is crossed by many episodes, more numerous in every one of Sidney's successive versions of his romance. The result has the air of a thing of pure caprice, the unbridled imaginings of a young man, a fiction staged outside time and in a land of chimera. Yet these extravagances, which would have delighted Don Quixote's heart and are in the tradition of the chivalrous romances, have a freshness because of Sidney's pleasure in telling a story and his sincere love for everything that is of valour and courtesy, because of his spontaneous passion for all beauty, whether of the body or of the soul. His fictions are a convenient frame for his ideas on morals and politics and his observations of life. For there is reason in this unreason, even realism in all this extravagance. Here and there the chivalrous and the sentimental are interrupted by the comic. The rustics Dametas, Miso, and Mopsa play in the romance the part of clowns in the theatre. It is, however, by his attempts at character-study that Sidney especially marks a progress. He contrasts his virtuous with his vicious characters, and his painting of vice has considerable boldness, as when he depicts the perversity of Queen Gynecia, in love with Pyrocles, or the

parts, and many scholars of the present day speak instead of old or primitive English literature. To the question: 'When does English literature begin?' they answer unhesitatingly that it begins with the first verse sung, the first line written in a Germanic tongue in the country now called England.

It may be that, unknown to themselves, this answer has been dictated as much by sentiment as by history. Until Germany had given evidence of her power in the world of intellect, England seems to have been at little pains to discover the expression of her national genius in the works which the Anglo-Saxons have left behind them. It was Germany, in her desire to prove her near kinship with the people who had produced Shakespeare and Milton, who made all the advances. Afterwards, the glory won by the Germans at the end of the eighteenth century in the fields of letters and philosophy, together with hostility to the France of Voltaire and Napoleon, inclined the English to strengthen those distant ties of intellectual kinship which bound them to the Germans, a new tendency first noticeable in the works of Coleridge, De Quincey, and Carlyle. The political prosperity and growing military power of Germany ensued in the second half of the nineteenth century, and they had an influence which was decisive. It was at the very moment at which defeated France was submitting to the Treaty of Frankfort that German and English philologists began to suspect the legitimacy of the word Anglo-Saxon, and extended the word English to cover all the language spoken and all the literature written in Great Britain from the time of the Germanic invasion, thus implying that linguistic and literary progress had suffered no interruption important enough to make the use of distinct terms necessary.

This tendency met with an unconscious ally in democratic sentiment; then in vigorous and umbrageous growth, which made in England a rough distinction between two castes, the caste of the Franco-Normans which was the aristocracy, and that of the Saxons with which the whole remainder of the people were identified. Every loss of prestige to the former class, every doctrine which tended to give it an adventitious and foreign character, could not fail to please the majority.

At the same time the love, even infatuation, for the 'Gothic,' with which Romanticism slowly infused all Europe, had exalted the most mutilated products of the Middle Ages at the expense of the so-called classical literatures, and had even gone

great souls and triumph of mean natures and a r
be understood both to the death of Sidney a
followed in 1590 by that of Walsingham, the Ma
century, and to the growing power of Burleigh.
theme of *The Ruines of Time*, the first poem of the
a long lamentation over the ruins of Verulam, cr
race of Dudley (Leicester). It is the subject also of
of the Muses, in which each of the nine sisters sigl
despair in turn and declares barbarism to have retu
knowledge to be scorned not only by the people, bu
the great, who should be its patrons In this degene
the Muses find nothing to praise They have no lofty s
Clio has nothing to write Singers have not quite v
from the land, but the rare favours are granted to parasi
sycophants. Luxury reigns, and the love which is sun
uccess is that which is impure The singers of chast
ivine love must give place to vile rhymesters with 'du
oughts.' As the favour of the great is withdrawn fron
ises, they are adopted by the vulgar, who debase t
their own level Melpomene and Thalia are misera
ecially Thalia, who complains that, where once there w
delights of comedy,

> In stead thereof scoffing Scurrilitie,
> And scornful Follie with Contempt is crept,
> Rolling in rymes of shameless ribaudrie
> Without regard or due decorum kept

; it becomes apparent that Spenser was out of tune ...th the spirit of his time, especially as it found its strongest and liveliest expression in the drama, which was embarking on its astonishing career at the moment when the *Complaints* were published. After nearly ten years Spenser repeated Sidney's attacks, and they had come to lack their earlier justification Spenser's ideal of nobility was offended and scandalized by the troubled, tumultuous life of the popular theatre

The *Complaints* include, however, a more personal poem, an elegy less strained in its vehemence which begins in a bantering spirit This is the graceful fable called *Muiopotmos, or the Fate of the Butterflie* The poet uses it to express his voluptuous nature, then shows his brilliant butterfly caught in the web of the horrible spider, fatal enemy to all poetry and love in this world Intoxicated with beauty, Clarion, the butterfly, flies into the garden of Nature to make his booty of delights Light and joyous he flits ...

Philology countenanced the annexation with its high authority. It placed beyond dispute the essentially German character of the English language. It proved, with the help of rediscovered texts, that the absorption into the old Germanic framework of foreign words, whether French or Latin, was progressive although considerable; that here and there the frames were perhaps strained or broken, but that they nevertheless subsisted. Philology, with its attentive lens, caught the slight successive modifications of speech, found nowhere a break in continuity, and concluded that there was a hidden unity behind the slow changes.

The transition from philology to literature seemed easy, and for many critics of the present day the distinction, formerly admitted, between Anglo-Saxon and English literature has ceased to exist. If terminology alone were in question, to waste time on assent or contradiction would be puerile. But the new doctrine obscures fundamental truths. For it is the property of the scientific study of languages to show that every *seeming revolution in speech derives from an unnoticed gradual* process. Philology succeeds unfailingly, where there is not a lack of texts, in proving that no sudden break exists anywhere in language. If supplied with texts, it will trace language back to Adam. But reflection shows that it would be as wrong, on this account, to give different names to Latin and the Romance languages, and to the literature of ancient Rome and the literatures of the nations now called Latin, as to Anglo-Saxon and English. Whither might not such a conception lead? To broaden meaning until all necessary distinctions are lost, is, in this instance, to forget that variations of language, however gradual, have finally such a cumulative effect that they render one age incomprehensible to another, although the two be undeniably connected by a progressive linguistic evolution. However it may be with the English language, there is no other literature which has lived and developed in as much ignorance of its indigenous past as

from flower to flower, ignorant of malice and perfidy until the day when he becomes the victim of Aragnoll, who sucks his blood. Spenser wrote nothing livelier or more charming than this mock-heroic fable, and its plaint, more intimate and sincere than the sombre rhetoric of the poems which accompany it, moves our pity more than they.

(*d*) 'ASTROPHEL.' 'COLIN CLOUT 'S COME HOME AGAINE.'—Spenser wrote other elegies as well as the *Complaints*: his *Daphnaïda*, which voices, in a fiction imitated from Chaucer's *Boke of the Duchesse*, Arthur Gorges's mourning over the death of his wife, and especially his *Astrophel*, an allegory of the life and death of Sir Philip Sidney. In both these poems he resorts to the pastoral form in order to decorate and transform reality. Sidney, the valiant knight, becomes a shepherd of Arcady wounded to death by an enraged boar, and the hero of Zutphen cannot be said to gain by the change. Spenser, in spite of years and the alteration of public tastes, is still faithful to his first and bucolic love. In *The Teares of the Muses* he shows Euterpe weeping over her deserted groves; but he himself still frequented them.

Another pastoral, *Colin Clout's Come Home Againe*, was the vehicle of his impressions of a visit to London in 1589–90, during which he published the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* and experienced the recognition and smiles of his sovereign, but also vexation, disillusionment, and neglect. *Colin Clout's Come Home Againe* is the most autobiographical of his poems, and his contribution to the pastoral *genre* which has most novelty. Colin Clout (Spenser), the shepherd, is visited by the Shepherd of the Ocean (Sir Walter Raleigh), who is charmed by his music and takes him to the court of Cynthia (Elizabeth), the great shepherdess. The meeting vith the brilliant adventurer who, on the morrow of the rmada, pointed England towards her future on the sea and her colonies brings the spirit of the new age into Spenser's etry. When the Shepherd of the Ocean is thus introduced to an eclogue, it is as though an eagre of the tide unexpecdly flooded the meadows on which flocks had pastured for nturies. Spenser takes pleasure in describing how the dsmen are scared by their visitor, who 'came far from the in-sea deepe.' In their stupefaction, their landsmen's fear ore tales of the unknown waters, the sudden transformatio mainly agricultural into a maritime country, one destine e mistress of the seas, is figured.

Colin's stay at the court is no less interesting: we are shown his adoration of the queen, his marvelling at the songsters and the ladies who form Elizabeth's magnificent train, his joy at the enthusiastic hearing given to his rustic lays, and then his sudden awakening from his fair dream, his discovery of the base intrigues, jealousies, false promises, and debauchery hidden beneath the seeming decorum, and of the malignity masked by courtesy. Angered and disgusted, Colin escapes and returns to his humble and simple shepherd's life and its constant and virtuous loves.

(c) THE 'AMORETTI' AND THE 'EPITHALAMION.'—Soon after his return to Ireland, in 1591, Spenser began his suit to Elizabeth Boyle, to whom are addressed the *Amoretti* sonnets and the superb *Epithalamion* which concludes them. These poems have a place to themselves among the works of Spenser. Only in them does he voice his feelings without recourse to allegory. The innovation illustrates the importance of the part played by the sonnet in this period. It was almost the sole medium of direct effusion and personal expression. Spenser, whose eyes were on the past, began by overlooking the sonnet. Sidney, with the glorious *Astrophel and Stella* series, was the first to use it, long after Wyatt and Surrey, and much more powerfully than they. It was the publication of *Astrophel and Stella* in 1591 which really gave rise to the passion for the sonnet, and which prepared the way for the *Amoretti* and several other collections. In the first rank of the works of the English Renascence, Spenser's sonnets come between those of Sidney and Shakespeare, from which they are distinct in form as in sentiment. His three quatrains linked by an artistic arrangement of rhymes and followed by a couplet, make a harmonious whole (*abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee*). Exceptionally at this time, these sonnets depart from Petrarch's precedent and are those of a betrothed lover. There is not here the unquiet of Sidney in love with Lord Rich's wife, or of Shakespeare whose mistress deceived him with his friend. Spenser's sonnets are unique by their purity. They tell a story of love without sin or remorse, its varying fortunes, the lover's sighs until the day on which he is accepted, and his final joy. In default of ardent passion, the *Amoretti* have the charm of a harmonious and pure atmosphere, they are bathed by a white light. They show better than anything else the quality in Spenser which Coleridge excellently named 'maidenliness,' his love of the virginal in woman.

conquest had reached its term. Driven forward by the Huns,

Angles were masters of the land north of the Humber, the

the seventh.

The oldest collections of laws show a civilization which was already considerable and was permeated by the spirit of

for corporal punishment. In each state a hierarchical society, in which centralization and democratic institutions were happily balanced, had been established.

ian to take the extant
product, and to seek
arism. To blend the
romantic picture Tacitus gives us of the first-century Germans with the picture of England in the eighth century is equivalent to placing on one plane the *Hymn of the Fratres Arvales* and the *Aeneid*. In the pages of the Latin historian the remote

of wild animals,
those nomads
sordid huts anc
by their hearths for days together, who knew nothing of agriculture and despised it. There is no relevance in what Tacitus tells of the religion of these tribes, their gods who corresponded to Mercury, Mars, and Hercules, their cult of Ertha, the Earth Mother, the forests of their superstition in which their atrocious human sacrifices were consummated.
ople not yet
w, but they
linger only
Between the
e Venerable

duction and the lyrical triumph of the Englisl All his gifts are united in it and seem to be raised to a higher power

He celebrated the marriage of another almost fully as his own in *Prothalamion* (1596), which i smooth images and harmonious lines Before wrote two more hymns to celestial Love and Bea antidote to the terrestrial hymns of his youth. came regret for his early exaltation, that of an artist enamoured of women's bodily splendours, and als with a world in which all beauty is ephemeral, a pre unceasing assaults of mutability His thoughts were to religion and God, to longing for the great rest whicl no change, when death took him in 1599, at the age o seven.

(*f*) 'THE FAERIE QUEENE.'—Even without *The Queene*, the beauty and the bulk of Spenser's work would assured him the first place among Elizabethans other playwrights. Yet it was *The Faerie Queene* which was masterpiece. He worked at it for twenty years, and le unfinished at his death It was his own supreme ambit and the supreme pride of England, which confidently pit this poem, as soon as its first books appeared, against t most famous epics of ancient and modern times

It is true that it has not been wholly translated into an language. The insularity of its renown cannot be explained by the fact that it is consecrated to the enhancement of the glory of England and her sovereign, for epics are strictly national by custom. It is the external complexity and the allegorical dress of this poem which have turned readers away from it, even English readers, who give it a formal admiration but hardly glance at it. Its real beauty is screened by its preface, in which the poet explains his virtuous design to make it at once an edifying treatise and a sort of creed in cipher, intelligible only to the initiate. Spenser himself innocently misled the public. He did not acknowledge to himself that his poem was one of the world's most magnificent picture-books. He assumed the grave airs of a preacher, yet could not sustain the part unflinchingly. Thus admirable painter and enchanting musician posed as a professor of morals Therefore he has given little satisfaction, except to a few unexacting souls, among those who seek doctrine in a boo and he has alienated those who read verse for pure

Spenser has invented an ingenious fable, worthy of Greek mythology, to account for the birth of these twin sisters, one of them a huntress-maid brought up by Diana, the other educated by Venus and vowed to love and marriage. From this premise he derives two contrasted portraits, two distinct lives, almost two characters. But it is Britomart who, alone among Spenserian heroines, really has the dimensions of a romantic creation. Her adventures are traced through three books of the poem. She is a new Bradamante and she certainly owes many characteristics to Ariosto's heroine. She is the chaste and indomitable warrior-maid whose lance makes the most valiant champions bite the dust, and also the passionate woman in love who struggles not to lay bare her heart, who knows the tortures of jealousy, and who at last yields, happy in her defeat, to the emotion which possesses her. Spenser concentrates on the portrait of this enamoured heroine all the power of subtle analysis of which he is capable. It is mainly she who changes the allegory into a romance.

But even this character is too largely imitated to account for the glory of the poem. *The Faerie Queene* is essentially a picture-gallery. Spenser is a great painter who never held a brush. It was his fate to be born in a country in which the plastic arts did not flourish until two centuries after his time. Had he been born in Italy, he might have been another Titian, a second Veronese; born in Flanders, he would have forestalled Rubens and Rembrandt. Fortune made him a painter in verse, perhaps the most wonderful who has ever lived.

Since he seems never to have been on the Continent, his initiation took place in the England which had for a hundred years been enriched by works of art imported from abroad. He visited the fine collections of his patron Leicester, and knew masterpieces through engravings or through the tapestries of Flanders and Arras. Sidney had spoken to him of the Venetians, of Veronese who had painted his portrait, and of the art critics he had met. The ambition to rival painting was born in English poetry through Spenser and Sidney simultaneously. It exists in *The Faerie Queene* as in *Arcadia*.

Many stanzas of *The Faerie Queene* are descriptions of tapestries and pictures, and the line and colour of words competes in them with that on the canvases of the masters. When Spenser purports to draw a person or a scene from nature, he is still inspired by the painter's method. He is unendingly

Angles were masters of the land north of the Humber, the

the seventh.

The oldest collections of laws show a civilization which was already considerable and was permeated by the spirit of

for corporal punishment. In each state a hierarchical society, in which centralization and democratic institutions were happily balanced, had been established.

Nothing is therefore more illusory than to take the extant Anglo-Saxon literature for a primitive product, and to seek in it the reflection of Germanic barbarism. To blend the

the *Aeneid*. In the pages of the Latin historian the remote germs of English political institutions or family customs may be discerned, but we must relegate to a dead past his descriptions of savages who went half naked or clothed in the skins of wild animals,

those nomads

sordid huts anc

by their hearths for days together, who knew nothing of agriculture and despised it. There is no relevance in what Tacitus tells of the religion of these tribes, their gods who corresponded to Mercury, Mars, and Hercules, their cult of Ertha, the Earth Mother, the forests of their superstition in which their atrocious human sacrifices were consummated.

ople not yet

w, but they

linger only

Between the

ie Venerable

enthralled by the human body, especially woman's body; no one of its details wearies his patience or escapes his observation. His grotesque and monstrous descriptions are not inferior to those in which he aims at absolute beauty. The grotesque is but the reverse of the beautiful; the horrible Dragon who is slain by the Red Cross Knight is as much a masterpiece of painting as the nymph Belphoebe.

With marvellous success he seeks chiaroscuro effects. He enjoys painting the nude, and he excels at reproducing the rippling surface or changing colour of stuffs.

A great allegorical composition tempts him as much as a portrait. His Wedding of the Thames and the Medway is on the scale of a fresco which would cover a ceiling or a wall in an imperial palace.

But a picture in which everything was in a state of arrested motion was not his sole model. His art was often ruled by the pageants, the processions of costumed characters with expressive gestures whose attitudes revealed the abstractions they represented. Such is his description of the Seven Deadly Sins or his procession of the Seasons and the Months. In these he almost exceeds the limits of poetry in his desire to reproduce in detail, necessarily by successive presentations, those feasts of the eye in which innumerable participants allowed the spectators simultaneously to enjoy every part. Nothing is too long for him. His joy in painting never flags.

He was also influenced by the pantomimes dear to his contemporaries, and in order to eliminate abstractions from his poem, to give a body and a countenance to everything, he staged the moral principles he wished to inculcate. He seems sometimes to be using verse to reproduce the acting of mimes who are taking part in a morality play, for instance in the episode of the fight between Sir Guyon and Furor and Occasion (II. iv. 4-16). So much is he carried away by his pleasure in a picture that he often half forgets its symbolical and moral meaning. His verses are like all the great allegorical canvases of the Renascence: we contemplate them not for edification, not always even for the meaning we hope to discover in them, but for their perfection of form and brilliancy of colouring. Such is, among others, his allegory of the House of Care, by which he wishes to show the tortures of a heart torn by jealousy. He imagines a lover who believes himself betrayed passing a night in a forge, where the terrible noise of [illegible] prevents him from sleeping. The whole scene is

masque, the scene-shifting, the composition of groups, the gestures and pantomime of the actors. He also reproduces the alternation of masque and antimasque, that is of the lofty and the grotesque. Finally, the music of the stage is matched by that of his verses.

Thus he found ready-made the framework of his imaginings. As spectator of some masque, he had seen the fairyland in which his strange stories happen, which is the home of his countless visions. It is essentially the country of the Arthurian romances, of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, but it has acquired more substance; it is the country of *Orlando Furioso*, presented not by a mocking fancy, but with a seriousness which carries conviction. A country of a thousand enchantments, a wild, desert, indeterminate region of immense forests, Spenser drew it largely from the 'savage-land' of Ireland, where his dreams could all but grow real and observation could revive his fancy.

It is a world in which surprise is habitual and strangeness the rule. In the end we become acclimatized to it and believe in it, as we accept the impossibilities of dreams and nightmares. As in a dream, a thin thread unites the fantastic discords. The passage from place to place and scene to scene is easy: as in a theatre, a mere lowering of the lights allows scenery to be swiftly changed.

Thus it is that this great poem, so artificially constructed, its disparate elements fused neither by heat of passion nor by fire of intellect, has another unity communicated to it by imaginative force. It has its harmony of atmosphere. Everything is bathed in the same strange, fantastic moonlight in which the contrast between whites and shadows is heightened and wonders are expected as native to the place.

For this dream-world to which Spenser's poem introduces us, and which has a certain operatic charm, it was necessary that the long unfolding visions should be constantly accompanied by music which would suspend the activity of the logical faculties and help to give credence to the chimeras. The illusion is effected by means of the powerful monotony of the nine-lined stanza, the stanza of the courtly ballade with decasyllabic lines to which a final alexandrine is added.[1]

Had Spenser been less painter than narrator, he would not have substituted this stanza for the *ottava rima* of his Italian

[1] The formula of the lines is *a b a b b c b c c*. It is a true stanza, a perfect [illegible] the rhymes are so interlaced that it cannot be broken.

Edda there is perfect harmony between the fabulous, immense, strange subject-matter and the vehement style. In Anglo-

mythology of extravagant proportions, to legends which may not be preserved in their original integrity, but of which the spirit at least is kept, and seems, indeed, to be strengthened rather than softened. The *Edda* presents, in abbreviated form, powerful dramatic pictures of fights between barbarous men, and of struggles between gods yet more barbarous and unbridled than the men. No wish to edify seems to have domi

rein

show

Anglo-Saxon poetry, taken as a whole, is a continuous piece of edification, elegiac in its dominant tone. It is a long

Latinists, about whom alone we have precise data. To them and to those like them we owe the preservation of the traces of primitive poetry. They spoke the native language and often themselves wrote verses in the vernacular, and in their Latin writings customs are indicated and scenes are sketched which reveal the life of their times more clearly than does Anglo-Saxon poetry. Sometimes, moreover, through their

makes itself

stics of the

reat Britain

introduced

among them. As early as 597, the monk Augustine came from Rome to convert them and founded in Kent, where the Jutes had established themselves, the church of Canterbury.

At much the same time, Christian Ireland was sending missionaries to the Angles, and was building the monasteries which were the earliest civilizing influences in Northumbria.

Saxons

that is

ce they

[1] The works of Aldhelm, Bede, and Alcuin are included in Migne's Patrology.

masters, for he would have feared to make his story fragmentary by this alexandrine line, of which the majestic length always suggests a conclusion, marking the end of each stanza and isolating it. But he liked the architectural effect of the long *finale* in his descriptions, and the expanded stanza corresponded to his wonted phrasing, to the long periods habitual to him, as to his contemporaries, even in prose. His stanza was the mould natural to his syntax and his thought. Although it was used by many poets after him, and by some of the greatest—Thomson, Byron, Shelley, Keats—it never seems to adapt itself as well to their tones as to his, for the moderns have a mode of thought and expression which is briefer, more analytical, and more disjointed than Spenser's. The poet of to-day is shorter in the wind. His breath fills less easily and less constantly the spacious interior of this harmoniously proportioned urn.

Spenser's metre, deliberately lengthened and weighted, so ample and so slow that its majesty, like that of a dee evenly flowing river, compensates for the qualities it has los The very fact that the poem is written in stanzas and all i this measure has important consequences. We hear musi which has slowed down, music with a perpetually recurring measure which lulls our intellect and little by little leads us away from the real world into another, a world of order and harmony where this stanza seems to be the natural rhythm. It keeps time in fairyland. It measures the hours in the region of nowhere, the kingdom of illusion. It has a hypnotic effect, induces a slumber in which the things of life are remote and we are in communion only with the poet's pictures. Every movement is regulated by it and obeys its laws, as though it were a metronome by which all the characters timed their acts and words. Never hurried, eternally reborn, its empire is that of a continuous sound in nature, as of the winds or the sea. No single stanza read separately can give an idea of the immense part which the stanza plays in this poem, in which each one inherits the cumulative force of all its predecessors. From his perception that they are on one pattern, the reader is brought to feel every individual stanza to be essential to the general order, and this unconscious recognition of an inevitability of form gives added value to the contents of the verses.

It is here and in his pictures that Spenser is marvellous. His glory must not be established on the less solid elements of

sprang. Their differences led to a struggle for supremacy which lasted until, in 664, the Synod of Whitby gave Rome the victory over Ireland. The distinction between the two disciplines subsisted, however, for a much longer time, and two distinct spirits are revealed in Christian writings, according to whether they emanate from the north or from the south, and are apparent through the Latin which was the invariable medium of the clerks.

Aldhelm (650?–709) was a product of the school of Canterbury. He was the pupil there of Abbot Hadrian, an African monk, and of Theodore, the Greek monk of Tarsus. A Saxon of noble birth, Aldhelm is said to have been a successful poet in the vernacular, but only his Latin works are extant. As abbot of Malmesbury, and afterwards as bishop of Sherborne, he was at once a saintly prelate and a humanist. He was as conversant with the Latin poets of the classical and of later periods as with the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers. He was a seventh-century stylist, an artist who was at once a barbarian and a refined scholar. It is strange to find the expedients of Anglo-Saxon rhetoric intruding themselves into his Latin works, which abound, to an amusing degree, with alliterations and in which he indulges all his Anglo-Saxon taste for imagery and periphrasis. As a rule, he addresses himself to ladies, that is to nuns, and there is a curious coquetry in his discourses to them. It is the praises of virginity which he indites in prose, the praises of virgins in hexameters. His Latin is grammatically correct to a point which is rare at the end of the seventh century, but his origin is revealed by his too heavily decorated style, by his violent and numerous metaphors, and by his habit of materializing the abstract. He alludes, for instance, to the golden necklace of the virtues, the white jewels of merit, the purple flowers of modesty, the swanlike whiteness of old age, and he speaks of 'the opening of the gates of dumb silence,' 'the shining lamps of chastity in which the oil of modesty burns,' 'the unclean sink of impurity in which the vessels of the soul are miserably engulfed,' 'the bastion of the Catholic faith shaken by the war-machines of secular arguments and overthrown by the battering-rams of atrocious ingenuity.' These images are the very warp and woof of his prose. The same characteristics reappear, with less startling effect, in his verse. His riddles, which have a place between the riddles of Symposius and the Anglo-Saxon riddles of which we shall speak later, are

The Faerie Queene. To let it rest on the moral value or the thought of the poem or on the feeling it conceals would be mistaken. Nor do we diminish his glory when we are thus careful of its security. It is enough for the renown of this great poem that, to music of unfailing harmony, it unrolls before our eyes innumerable dazzling visions. It is enough for Spenser's name that he was one of the master musicians, and perhaps the greatest of the picture-makers, of the world.

4. *Other Court Poets. Raleigh, Oxford, Fulke Greville.*—Sir Walter Raleigh (1552?–1618)[1] was near Lyly, Sidney, and Spenser in age and Spenser's friend, and was, like them all, connected with the court. He was occasionally a poet. He is the type of the fine courtier, high-spirited, proud, and bold, who writes some striking verses, like marginal scribblings on the page on which his wonderfully active career is set forth. Of his long poem to Cynthia, otherwise Elizabeth, nothing is left but a fragment in which the former favourite of the queen flogs himself into a pretence of devouring love and despairing regrets. Of far more worth are his few sonnets, of which one magnificently welcomes Spenser's masterpiece, and some short lyrical pieces in which this adventurer condemns the emptiness of the courtly life which had fascinated him (*The Lie, The Pilgrimage*).

Raleigh gave more time to prose than poetry. With attrac tive simplicity he relates his expedition to Guiana in search the fabulous Manoa In the prison he left only for the scaffc he wrote an eloquent *History of the World*, in which his sho omings as an historian are redeemed by superb pages. Ab d been suspected of sympathy for Marlowe's athe e was, in point of fact, a deist with his own p ended his life absorbed in grave religious tho k of this amateur there is something at once st mate which compels attention.

, the men of the court, Edward de Vere, E 1550–1604),[2] was distinguished as much by his s by the extravagance of his life The typic te lord, he resumed in himself several of the v some of the artistic and literary qualities of the tra

[1] by A. M. C. Latham (1929), *The Discovery of Gui* vt's *Voyages*, vol iii, 1598), *The History* (1736), by E Gosse (1886), by nier (1931)

llanies of the F

ingenious and sometimes graceful. In his taste for riddles, as in his passion for metaphors, the Latinist Aldhelm betrays his origin.

The great Latinist of Northumbria, the Venerable Bede, affords a striking contrast to Aldhelm. Whatever may be thought of his taste, Aldhelm was first of all an artist with whom manner has precedence over matter. But of Bede (672–735) the reverse is true. This Angle, who was brought
le adult life in
ned theologian
He absorbed
and he summed up in himself the culture of an age which had lost its inheritance on the Continent. The variety of his knowledge and his interests appears in the subjects of his principal works—a treatise on metre, a natural history, a universal chronology of the Christian era, based on serious astronomical studies, a martyrology, lives of the abbots of Wearmouth and Jarrow, a life of Saint Cuthbert, above all, the *Ecclesiastical History of the Angles*.

ing
an(
and style are impersonal, clear, simple, much above the level of his time. His pre-eminence is one of intelligence. He informs on points of fact and he interprets manners and customs. His *Ecclesiastical History* is still the chief authority for the early period of which it traces the history from a religious point of view, the years between Julius Caesar's conquest and 731, that is, four years before the author's death. The conversion and the struggle between the Roman and the Irish Church and final triumph of the former, are its principal themes. Yet Bede, the historian and learned man, has been too exclusively praised. His extreme simplicity, which is in so great contrast to the artificiality of Aldhelm, and the weakness of his surviving Latin verses, have done harm to his literary reputation. In Bede, more than in any

penetrating than any which breathes in other works. His direct narration of facts, and the marvels of an artless faith in which he clothes them, are far more eloquent than all the

(*a*) SAMUEL DANIEL.—Samuel Daniel (1562–1619) [1] was born in Somerset, the son of a music master. After having passed through Oxford and visited Italy, he was tutor first to William Herbert, son of the Earl of Pembroke and of Sidney's sister, and then to a daughter of the virtuous Countess of Cumberland. After Spenser's death he became a sort of voluntary poet laureate. Under James I he was dramatic censor and groom of the chamber to the queen. His tastes were sober and moderate; he lived quietly in his London house cultivating the Muses; then retired to a Somersetshire farm. By the even march of his existence he contrasted with most of his contemporary poets. His poetry, well behaved as he, is the most tranquil and classical of the period. Nearly everything in the English Renascence which shocked French taste when this had been purified by the seventeenth century is missing from Daniel's work, and so is the 'fine frenzy' beloved of the Elizabethans. He was a moralist and historian first of all; he wrote the poetry of reflection, not of passion. His calm voice could, in that tumultuous time, hardly make itself heard. A correct and pure writer, he brought the qualities of prose into verse. Imagination is rare in his subjects and never disturbs his style.

He made trial of the theatre, but since he lacked the impetuous vigour of his dramatic rivals, since he was in love with nobility and serenity, he turned from the popular stage and wrote tragedies, classical in form, modelled on Seneca and the French poet Garnier—*Cleopatra* in 1594 and *Philotas* in 1611. These academic dramas could have no more than a *succès d'estime*. He succeeded better with his masques, which contain very attractive passages: *The Vision of Twelve Goddesses* (1604), *The Queen's Arcadia, a Pastoral Tragi-comedy* (1606), and *Hymen's Triumph.*

Round about his chief work, *The Civil Wars*, are grouped a fair number of miscellaneous poems, sonnets to Delia, epistles, dedications, panegyrics, funeral eulogies, pastoral songs. The even quality of his verses is surprising for his day.

He translates with charm the suave eulogy of the golden age in Tasso's *Aminta*. There is real feeling in his *Letter from Octavia to Antony* (1599), and even more in his *Complaint of Rosamond* (1592), in which the unhappy mistress of Henry II

[1] Complete poetical works in Chalmers's *British Poets*, vol. iii; complete works in prose and verse published by Grosart, 5 vols. (1885). His *Delia* reprinted by Arber in *An English Garner*, vol. iii. *Poems and A Defence of Ryme*, ed. A. C. Sprague (Harvard University Press, 1930).

effusions and the paraphrases of the poets. Moreover, Be like Aldhelm, was a student of vernacular verse, of which lucid reason enabled him to interpret the genius. The wh of the so-called Cædmonian epic could better be spared th those few bald pages in which Bede tells us how the p peasant Cædmon received his inspiration. All the verses Cynewulf taken together would be poor compensation for ensuing scene, which has been quoted over and over ag and can never be quoted too often. It occurs in the accou of the conversion of Northumbria in 633. When Ædwin a his nobles had been asked to embrace Christianity, one no spoke as follows:

'So, O king, does the present life of man on earth seem to me, in co parison with the time which is unknown to us, as though a sparrow f swiftly through the hall, coming in by one door and going out by other, and you, the while, sat at meat with your captains and liegem in wintry weather, with a fire burning in your midst and heating room, the storm raging out of doors and driving snow and rain befor For the time for which he is within, the bird is sheltered from the sto but after this short while of calm he flies out again into the cold an seen no more. Thus the life of man is visible for a moment, but know not what comes before it or follows after it. If, then, this n doctrine brings something more of certainty, it deserves to be follow

Nowhere else is there anything at once so exact and ample. The image is as great as it is intimate, precise althou mysterious. Shakespeare never produced one which was mo striking or which better conveyed the feeling of life's strang ness. Nothing equal to it is to be found in the whole Anglo-Saxon poetry.

It is true and characteristic, if a fact of undetermin importance, that Bede was the disciple of the Irish mon settled in Wearmouth and Jarrow. The pious simplicity the way of life in these monasteries, a simplicity they creat remained dear to him. Although he rallied to allegiance the Church of Rome, he never stifled regret for the pleasa days of his youth, and the Celts or Gaels who were his maste can hardly be denied an important share in the training of fine mind. To acknowledge this is to touch the insolu problem of what influence the Celtic spirit secretly exercis on extant Anglo-Saxon poetry.

The illustrious Alcuin (730?–804), Charlemagne's collabo tor from 790 onwards, also came out of Northumbria. He w brought up in York. Northumbria gave this great clerk to France which had relapsed into barbarism. Alcuin left

mingles her regret for her transgressions and her sighs for her lost beauty. She draws the moral from her story herself, and it is softened as it passes through her lips.

But a mood of serious reflection was more habitual to Daniel than fancy or tenderness. It is not only by accident that the lines from his work which are most often quoted are the lyrical dialogue between Ulysses and the Siren, standing for honour and pleasure, labour and rest, and the *Epistle to the Countess of Cumberland*, in which he defines, in fine, strong, and calm stanzas, the sage who inhabits the serene temples of wisdom and is raised above private passion or political agitation.

Apt as he is to discourse and discuss in verse, his talent is happily displayed in a didactic poem in the form of a dialogue, *Musophilus* (1599), which contains a general defence of letters. Musophilus constitutes himself champion of letters against Philocosmus, who recommends an active life and rules out all poetry which does not impel to heroic action. Like Spenser in *The Teares of the Muses*, but with less vehement rhetoric, Musophilus deplores that so little patronage should be given to literature. He sees poetry and eloquence as the guardians of lofty morals and the forces which cleanse a nation. He has a deep faith in the strength and destiny of his mother tongue. What a great thing it would be if England, first of the nations in worth, became first in poetry also! Daniel has a vision of an English literature which should be read over the whole world. It should supplant Italian literature, now decadent:

> *When all that ever hotter spir'ts express'd*
> *Comes better'd by the patience of the north*

Patriotism was Daniel's dominant feeling and it led him to devote his capital effort to the history of his country. He recounts no such dream of the past as Spenser, nor such a long, mainly legendary chronicle as William Warner, in rude and awkward fourteen-syllabled lines, told in *Albion's England* (1586), a miscellany of ill-arranged stories which was so successful that it was republished in successive and enlarged edition until the author's death in 1609. Daniel did not shar Warner's desire to begin his book at the Flood and bri it down to the execution of Mary Stuart. He was impress by the effects of civil war and uneasy lest, since the success Elizabeth was entirely uncertain, it should be renew

country when the earliest civilization of the Angles was about to be extinguished, for the terrible Danish invasions, which ruined monasteries and centres of learning, were beginning. Although as much of Alcuin's life as is historical was spent among the Franks, he stayed in his own country until he was sixty years old, and is therefore a representative, and a brilliant one, of the culture and the mentality of the Angles. His Latin poetry is less correct but more personal than Aldhelm's and sometimes has a fine ring. He finds moving distichs in which to bid farewell to his monastic cell before he leaves it for the court, and that cell, giving on to a blossoming orchard and green lawns, beside a stream, seems indeed to have been a place to regret. He sighs as he reflects that another will occupy it, that he will no longer be able to meditate verses in it, yet he recollects that all in this world is fleeting, that such is the common lot.

Many lines of his work are addressed to Charlemagne, whom he celebrates under the name of David, or compares to Homer, himself assuming the name of Flaccus (Horace). It is, however, his prose which is of special interest to us. Alcuin, writing prose, is an educationist who resumes all branches [illegible]
is between a young Saxon and the young Frank whom he teaches, sometimes between Alcuin and Charlemagne himself, sometimes between Alcuin and his pupil Pepin, the emperor's son. Often the questions are very like riddles, a proof of the strong Anglo-Saxon taste for those ingenious exercises. The answers are nearly always periphrases or metaphors. There is no better introduction to an intelligent reading of Anglo-Saxon poetry than any extract from these dialogues, in which the pupil is the questioner:

What is the body? The spirit's lodging
What is hair? The clothing of the head.
What is the beard? The distinction between the sexes, the mark of age.
What are the eyes? The guides of the body, the vessels of light, the index to thought

Sometimes fancy becomes rich and beautiful as well as curious:

What is the sun? The splendour of the world, the beauty of the sky, the grace of nature, the honour of the day, the distributor of the hours

rhythm, made, it would seem, for their air and refrain. They vanish at the attempt to wring sense from them, for instance 'When that I was and a little tiny boy,' the epilogue to *Twelfth Night*. The nimble versification is unfailingly marvellous. Every resource and variety of form is used—the eight- and six-syllabled iambic line, the seven-syllabled trochaic line, the anapaestic line, combinations of these metres, refrains which do not scan but which delight the ear, simple and double rhymes, the most various arrangements of echoing words. The law governing them cannot be specified, for almost each one has its distinct form, line, or stanza. They are made for music, and their only rule is to fit the air with which, or for which, they have been created.

Shakespeare's contemporaries had not his varied wealth or his realism, but they decorated their plays with songs as sweet and melodious as his, especially Thomas Dekker, the author of 'Cold's the wind' and 'Art thou poor,' Beaumont and Fletcher with their 'Lay a garland on my hearse,' 'Hence all you vain delights,' and 'Drink to-day and drown all sorrow,' and Webster with his 'Call for the robin-redbreast.' Ben Jonson has many songs, of a somewhat classical turn, scattered through his masques and comedies—'Queen and huntress,' 'Still to be neat,' 'Come, my Celia'—and the well-known 'Drink to me only with thine eyes,' which occurs not in a play, but in his collection *Under-Woods*.

The use of songs persisted on the stage until the last in date of the great dramatists, Shirley, who provides a magnificent specimen, 'The glories of our blood and state.' The Restoration did not break the tradition, and charming songs echo through Dryden's plays.

This rich age produced a lyricism which approximated to the popular ballad, as in Drayton's ode on Agincourt, and also little delicate poems worthy to figure in the Greek Anthology. The transition from the one to the other was insensible. The total result was very English owing to the mastery acquired over words and sounds and owing to an indefinable valiancy of turn and expression. The aroma of antiquity and the scent of modernity were blended. Nothing else in all this wealth of literature is so essentially poetic. This is its delicate, swaying crest, its exquisite and supreme flower.

(*d*) THE SONNETEERS.[1]—The vogue of the sonnet in the

[1] *Elizabethan Sonnets*, ed. Sidney Lee, 2 vols. (1904); Sidney Lee, *The French Renaissance in England* (1910); Janet G. Scott, *Les Sonnets élisabéthains* (1929);

What is the sea? The path of boldness, the earth's bourne, the divider of regions, the receiver of streams, the spring of showers. . . .

If the vulgar tongue be substituted for Latin, there is no difference in style between these didactic definitions and Anglo-Saxon poetry. Like Aldhelm, Alcuin carried into his Latin the turns of thought and the imaginative and slightly childish mentality of his fellow-countrymen. If the great clerks whom we have enumerated have left us no verses in the vernacular—such as they wrote have been almost all lost—they are yet hardly less representative of the Anglo-Saxon spirit than are the writers in the vulgar tongue. It was among these men, perhaps by them, surely by anonymous clerks like them, that the poems which have reached us were compiled or were, at least, edited and expurgated.

The characters of Roman writing seem to have been imported with Christianity, and to have taken the place of the runes, which the Germanic peoples engraved on monuments and used for brief correspondence, but in which they do not appear to have recorded the verses of their poets, the gleemen or scops. It follows that memories of the pagan epoch have invariably been transmitted to us through the medium of the clerks, and that what we call Anglo-Saxon literature has therefore been inevitably subject to the influence of Latin, and to no other foreign influence. It is a literature in which the direct and realistic expression of the national genius, unmodified by Christianity, is rarely found and dangerous to seek.

It is a literature compiled by clerks, but by clerks whose fathers were warriors and vikings, and who were very near the surviving memories of the warlike age. The word battle, the thought of prowess, awoke irrepressible ardours in them. It cost them little effort to call up the manners and the scenes of so recent a past. The terms of an unaltered language, the accents of unchanged prosody, the recurring combinations of words and images inevitable to alliteration: all these often took them back to the days of adventure by land and sea and led them to preserve such fragments as oral tradition had handed down to them. Thus their poetry, even when it is entirely Christian, is full of reminiscences and echoes of paganism. Less dominated by Latin than their prose, it deforms and reforms Holy Writ, in accordance with its own traditions, even while it reproduces it. It thinks Scripture anew and interprets it in national terms. It crowns biblical warriors with the helmet and shields them with the limewood

Elizabethan age was as brief as it was intense. With few exceptions it was confined to the six years from 1591 to 1597, during which some twenty collections appeared one after another under the impulse given by Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*. All these were of love sonnets, and some which are complimentary and dedicatory and are scattered through the books of the period should be added to them.

Nothing better shows in miniature the general characteristics of Elizabethan poetry, the mingling of the conventional and the independent, the imitated and the original, of which it is constituted. So great is the influence plainly exercised on the sonnets by Italy and France that recently, when the distinction between the work of masters and pupils was overlooked, they were characterized as an artificial product. Undoubtedly to write a love sonnet after Petrarch is to Petrarchize, and all who wrote them subsequently to the great Italian are in some sort his disciples. But as much is true of any poet who casts his poetry, or simply his verse, in a mould already in use, yet no one refuses to acknowledge his originality if he produces a personal impression in the form which another has invented.

In spite of the sonnets of Wyatt and Surrey, the English had neglected this *genre* and had even forgotten the exact meaning of the word sonnet, applying it to lyrical effusions very various in form. Such was the current designation of *The Hecatompathia: or Passionate Centurie of Love*, which Thomas Watson brought out in 1582 and which is in reality made up of little poems of eighteen lines divided into three sestets. The young poet himself introduces them ingenuously as exercises in style having no correspondence with his own sentiments. They are paraphrases of the foreign Petrarchians without value beyond harmony of style. Watson permeated the highly susceptible language with the images and the subtle turns of thought brought into favour by the continental sonneteers.

Many later writers of regular sonnets, or at least of poems of fourteen lines, did no more than Watson. The search for sources, so active in the last half-century, has discovered in Ronsard and Desportes and the minor and major Petrarchians of Italy the origin of many sonnets found in Henry Constable's *Diana*, Samuel Daniel's *Delia*, Thomas Lodge's *Phillis*, and the like. These poets made many literal translations; they are chiefly to be valued for their style, which sometimes, as with Daniel, is highly distinguished.

buckler, and sends the saints of the Mediterranean to voyage over grey and ice-cold seas, while the low, rainy sky of the north broods over Palestine, wolves roam the Holy Land, and crows and wild swans fly above it. Thus this poetry presents a continual contradiction, yet constantly, by changes of [illegible]

[illegible]

pagan in feeling and everywhere national in form.

4. *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: its Manuscript Sources, its General Character.*[1]—The way in which the texts of Anglo-Saxon [illegible]

[illegible]

The second [illegible] Cathedral [illegible] is almost forgotten until 1826. Its contents are a curious medley of pious poems, of half-pagan lyrical and elegiac compositions, and of riddles and sententious verses. Thirdly, *Beowulf* and the biblical fragment *Judith*, unknown until the end of the eighteenth century, are strangely associated in the British Museum manuscript. And lastly, in the manuscript which [illegible]

Daniel, the calmest and most temperate of the Eliz the poet of rest, may be taken to typify the men w sonnets to be in the fashion, without conviction and without a real mistress to sing. She whom he remains invisible, inaccessible, cold, unknown and His sonnets are so many chill appeals to her pity and well leave her unmoved. But Daniel has merits as a The language of his sonnets is usually pure and their ve tion correct in spite of some hard elisions and forced ep in the manner of du Bartas ('Muse-foe Mars'). If they i too much to rhetoric they are clear and have unity; somet a pale ray of imagination is shed on them; and here and t a line or two have a true beauty which revives the rea ('O clear-eyed Rector of the holy hill').

Barnabe Barnes is the antithesis of Daniel. He is frenzied poet, or at least it pleases him to assume airs dementia, and he escapes servility by extravagance. Ther is a curious mixture of factitious delirium, obscure indecency and true verbal vigour in his collection *Parthenophil and Parthenope*. We cannot tell whether this is a very young poet who dreams unchastely and is intoxicated by rhyme, or a man of vulgar mind who swaggers of set purpose. The content of his collection is curious to consider. Comparisons, epithets, mythology, obscenities, puns, parentheses, questions, and, above all, apostrophes are heaped one upon another. We understand where we can, and probably there is not always any sense to be understood. The best lines occur in the madrigals which follow the sonnets and are of more worth than they.

On the whole, after the great sonneteers Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, it is Michael Drayton who bears reading best. His collection *Idea*, augmented in every edition which appeared from 1594 to 1619, is a sort of encyclopaedia in which all the familiar themes recur with others added to them. We do not know if his Idea represents one woman or several or none, if during the twenty-five years covered by the series the poet flitted from love to love or from fancy to fancy. While he hardly gives the impression of a true passion, shows little delicacy, and is often vulgar, he yet is versatile and animated and more than once ingenious to the point of the fantastic. The taste for geography manifest in his long poem is betrayed in several of his best sonnets, for instance in the first, in which he represents himself as an adventurous seafarer who has

short fragments of verse from some still more recently re- [65
covered pages of parchment, the one on the battle of Finnesburh and the other on an episode of the life of Waldhere, otherwise Walter of Aquitaine, and also the important fragment, *The Death of Byrhtnoth* or *Battle of Maldon*, published in 1726 from a manuscript which is lost. Such is almost the whole of the known poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, and it is on these texts that the attempt must be based to establish the dominant features of this poetry, which is at once strongly characterized and very uniform.

At the time when the extant texts were compiled, its form was already fixed. This primitive metrical literature had been subject, before it assumed its present guise, to a process of ossification. The most ancient works are posterior to the date at which versification and rhetoric assumed definite shape, and every subject, whether Christian or pagan, epic or personal, great or small, whether the story of the Creation or a riddle on a rake, is clothed in the same dress. Literary decoration and the turn that is given to a theme are always identical. The singer's voice has unchanging volume. The effect on the senses and the imagination hardly varies.

1. The most profound and also the most general element in all poetry is to be sought in language. The qualities and deficiencies of a language predetermine the field of poetry and its successes and failures, almost independently of the personal genius of the poets who use it. The chief task of a poet is to take skilful advantage of the resources a language offers to him. Words have a particular expressive value which is outside or beyond their meaning, and although the force of association of ideas may supply a grace or an energy, a lucidity or a mystery other than that which belongs to a word at its simplest, the fact remains true that the maximum of suggestion is reached when sound and meaning are in harmony. Thus it might be said, of the essence of the English language, that in its Teutonic elements it surpasses French by its vigorous strokes, but that it speaks with a less melodious voice. What the French weakly call *force*, has an English name, *strength*, from the Anglo-Saxon *strengthu*, in which seven muscular consonants strangle a single vowel, but in the French word *oiseau*, a solitary consonant murmurs among soft vowels and diphthongs, with such effect that it makes the English *bird* (A.-S. *bridd*) seem to have little power of suggestion.

sophers as vivaciously as La Bruyère, and he can give away the tricks of his trade:

> As Apothecaries we make new mixtures every day, pour out of one vessel into another, and as those old Romans robbed all the cities of the world, to set out their bad sited Rome, we skim off the cream of other men's wits, pick the choice flowers of their tilled gardens to set out our own sterile plots

He exactly describes his own manner of writing. 'As a River runs, sometimes precipitate and swift, then dull and slow; now direct, then *per ambages*; now deep, then shallow; now muddy, then clear; now broad, then narrow; doth my style flow.' It is a style recognizable by a French reader, who knows it in Rabelais and Montaigne. Perhaps it is with Rabelais that Burton has the most striking analogy of form, for both writers follow the curious method of emptying on to every statement their whole store of synonyms, letting fly all their epithets, compelled thereto by no necessity of meaning, but by their rather childish pleasure in displaying wealth of vocabulary, their joy in handling and feeling the words at their command.

In subject, on the other hand, Burton is much nearer to Montaigne. Although he professes to confine himself to melancholy, he reviews all the follies of man. Sometimes, when he intervenes directly and speaks of himself, relating his life or experiences, he is very close to the author of the *Essais*. His quotations, of which he has too many, do not distinguish him from the French writer, save that they are part of the very warp and woof of his style. But the rigorous divisions of *The Anatomy*, Burton's lack of a really definite and personal philosophy, his inferior penetration and his less free spirit, his fewer profound observations and greater share of pedantry and eccentricity, place him, in spite of everything, very much below Montaigne. He is more bookish, less spontaneous and keen, lets himself go less, and has not the same grace. The Frenchman walks the great high road of students of morals and of society. Burton lives remote from beaten paths, in a hermitage of baroque construction, to which few to-day have access.

Yet this fantastic writer had in England lasting influence of a sort. The numerous editions into which his book ran up to 1676 are proof of his success with two generations In the eighteenth century he was forgotten and could be robbed with ... especially by the humorist Sterne It was tempting

The primary character of the Anglo-Saxon language derives from the predominance of its consonants. Not only are syllables introduced by a consonant or group of consonants (*h, sc, sp, st, str, hr, thr*, etc.), but these consonants form the vital part of syllables. They are explosive, not quiescent; and their noise drowns the neighbouring vowels, a charac-

word of a sentence, make up the law of Anglo-Saxon versification. The comparative insignificance of vowels is shown in the rule that vowel sounds, which may be substituted for alliterations or repetitions of initial consonants, need not be identical. For here it is not the sound of the vowel but the absence of the consonant which is important. The effect is

should be two rhythmic accents. The recurrence of the same consonant or group of consonants, to introduce the two accentuated syllables of the first section, and that of the first accentuated syllable of the second section, give the alliteration, as follows:

> steap stanlitho—stige nearwe (*Beowulf*, II, line 159).
> Steep stone slopes, paths narrow

There is often only one alliteration in the first section.

2. While the line is thus based on accent combined with alliteration, and while both of these depend on the predominating value of consonants, the style and the construction of the poetic phrase derive from another characteristic of the language.

Unlike modern English, which is one of the most analytical and least inflected of languages, Anglo-Saxon expresses changes of tense, number, and person either by modifications of the root vowels or by differences of termination. It is a language nearly as synthetic as Latin, endowed with four cases for either number, several declensions of the noun, two declensions of the adjective, and numerous conjugations of the verb. Its syntax, that of an inflected language, shows a very complex use of cases and great freedom in the arrange-

to make a parade of knowledge by means of the wholesale spoliation of this great folio, neglected by every one except Doctor Johnson, whose daily reading it was. In the nineteenth century Burton's reputation was revived by Charles Lamb, who rendered him a sort of cult, composing a pastiche of his style in *Curious Fragments*, and amusing himself by imitating his methods in his own essays.[1]

A little of Burton's eccentricity and pedantry marks nearly all the prose of these fifty years. It lacked the clear, even simplicity which to the French is the proper characteristic of true prose. It was not yet entirely distinct from poetry. But it was tending noticeably to conquer more and more ground. In spite of the resistance of Latin, it had extended its sphere to include more diverse subjects. It embraced theology; it touched on philosophy; it made definite conquest of literary criticism; and it annexed the moral essay and the 'characters.' It shared the elasticity of the novel, could be romantic, sentimental, realistic, or comic. It had already an important part in the theatre. It had learnt to relate and to discuss. It could mock and it could be serious. When the poverty and uncertainty of prose before 1578 is remembered, its rapid progress is striking, and seems almost to equal the advance made by poetry. The victory of the Puritans interrupted its employment in the light and frivolous kinds of literature, which disappeared until the Restoration, but the generation of the middle of this century used a prose which, while less diverse, attained in the higher kinds of literature to a magnificent development of those qualities of eloquence, strength, and amplitude already apparent in some of the prose-writers we have reviewed.

[1] English literature has a partial claim to John Barclay (1582–1621), who was born at Pont-à-Mousson of a Scottish father and French mother, and wrote in Latin his picaresque romance, *Euphormionis Satyricon* (1603–7), and his more famous historical *roman à clef*, *Argenis* (1617), dedicated to Louis XIII. The latter work is, however, mainly concerned with France and had there its chief success, which gave an impulse to the pseudo-historical romances of the middle seventeenth century. In fact, Barclay was the typical cosmopolitan writer of the time, and his use of Latin, the only cosmopolitan language, is characteristic.

CHAPTER V

THE DRAMA UNTIL SHAKESPEARE, FROM 1580 TO 1592[1]

1. *Fertility of the Drama. The Difficulty of Tracing its Evolution.*—Rich as are all the manifestations of the English literature of the Renascence, its highest glory and the most direct and original expression of the national genius are dramatic. Elsewhere imitation and artifice play a part; aristocratic sentiment or an ephemeral fashion is a check on spontaneity, ruling out whatever is of the people, or colouring style or subject to make it archaic, euphuistic, Arcadian, or pastoral. On occasion, the greatest authors pride themselves on exclusiveness. Spenser writes with his eyes on the court, especially on its lords and ladies. Shakespeare, dazzled by the friendship of the young Earl of Southampton, heads *Venus and Adonis* with two arrogant lines from Ovid: 'Let the mob admire what is vile; to me may fair Apollo serve cups filled with water of Castalia.' The influence of antiquity and of foreign countries, especially Italy, is everywhere so noticeable, that only rarely do we receive an immediate and broad impression of the English genius Everything bears a little the mark of a restricted public, a set or a coterie. The sonneteers, the anacreontic poets, and the various humanists do not wholly belong to their country, but owe allegiance also to foreign writers who inspire them and whose rivals they are.

The theatre was open to all: the whole town was attracted by it and enthusiastic for it. It was truly national. For many it took the place of the church they neglected; to most, in this time of no newspapers and few and little-read novels, it was the only source of intellectual pleasure. A secular

[1] General works: A. W. Ward, *History of English Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne*, 2nd ed., 3 vols (1899), F. E. Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama*, 2 vols. (1908); E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford, 1923, a fundamental work; superseding to a great extent its predecessors), F. S Boas, *An Introduction to Tudor Drama* (Oxford, 1933, an excellent sketch); J. A Symonds, *Shakespeare's Predecessors* (1884); A. Symons, *Studies in the Elizabethan Drama* (1920) Many plays critically edited in the Belles Lettres Series, G. P. Baker, general editor (Boston).

relief, or, more frequently, for pure love of periphrasis, or again, for the sake of alliteration. The body becomes the bone-chamber; the heart, the treasure-chamber; thought, the treasure of the breast; the breast, the close of the heart; the warrior is the man with the corslet, the lance-bearer or the swordsman; the sailor is the traveller on the waters; armour, the warrior's garb or the shirt of battle; and man, the earth's inhabitant or the word-carrier.

Many primitive customs and beliefs are revealed by these poetic synonyms. The chief or king is the *beag*-giver—*beags* being rings which served at once as ornaments and as money

Numerous composite words bear witness to the Anglo-Saxon enthusiasm for war; battle is the game of blades, the conflict of lances or the cracking of banners, and the sword is battle lightning, while blood is the sweat of war or the flow of carnage.

The elements and natural phenomena supply as many composite terms as war. The sea is the path of sails, the whale's road or the swan's pathway; the flood is the waves' journey; fog, the helmet of the air; and darkness, the helmet of night.

collects, the more pleased he seems to be, and the poems often so closely recall the Litany to the Virgin—'Mystical Rose, Tower of David, Tower of Ivory, House of Gold, Ark of the Covenant, Gate of Heaven, Morning Star'—as almost to

Saxon clerk.

en the noble

firmament,

with dark-

ness cover'd, when night clos'd over the cultured land's adornments.' [1]

Often an object is designated only by composite words or periphrases, and its identity must therefore be guessed. Thus the eyes must be understood by 'jewels of the head,' the body by 'fleshy clothing,' armour by 'the eorl's raiment.' It was a sport of the poets to cause an object to be divined by one

[1] B Thorpe's translation of the *Legend of St. Guthlac*, line 1212.

*E

tie was despised. The ideal was, in the last analysis, still *monastic*: it was virginity.

To Milton, woman was man's inferior, an imperfect creature, dangerous if she were not mastered. His view was supported by his memories as by the story of Eve. His Eve is charming and capricious, coquettish and wayward, incapable of sound reasoning and an easy prey to sophistry. Man's duty is not to humble himself before her, but to feel and proclaim himself master. If passion blinds him too much, he is blamed by the angel Raphael or by Christ Himself. Adam's crime consists in his chivalrous behaviour on the day on which he sinned in order that he might share the punishment of hi[s] guilty wife.

Milton also rebels against the doctrine of the superiority [of] virginity to marriage. In the complete union of husba[nd] and wife, in which the husband is the chief and the w[ife] his obedient companion, Milton sees supreme morality [and] true felicity. His famous apostrophe, 'Hail, wedded lo[ve]' sounded the dirge of the old conception, and restored and perfect love, equally distinct from lust and from asceti[cism] or Platonism, to its place in the centre of human life.

Milton so constantly returns to himself in his epic th[at he] limits its objective value, but this very self-centredne[ss im]parts to it a continuous emotion and eloquence and a[n] ardour which culminate when, on the threshold of hi[s] subject, he invokes the Holy Ghost, or when he ut[ters his] complaint of his blindness, but which are present [whenever] as the sacred legend touches a chord in his memo[ry. His] absorbent personality is the central force of the po[em, and] his art, more austere than in his youth but still [rich,] makes its beauty.

It is still a humanist's art. His superb rejectio[n] is in the spirit of the poets of the Renascence wh[o lived] in communion with the ancients. The Graeco-F[...] [...] epic, replete with Hebraic matter, is [...] Its aspect, its divisions, and [...] [...] *Iliad*. A unique eve[...] [...] by episode[...]

of its attributes, an amusement known as 'kenning' which led to the riddle, so that collections of riddles are naturally among the most interesting of these poetical productions.

'Almost the whole rhetoric of the Anglo-Saxons is made up of such perpetual periphrases. These poets abound in abrupt metaphors, condensed in single composite words, but they hardly ever make the consecutive and extensive comparisons which are born both of imagination and of reason. Only the artist who is master of himself and at peace can note the resemblances of different objects and study them side by side. He rarely does it if he feels passion, never if he is without culture. It would be hard to find in Anglo-Saxon poetry a metaphor which is not swift and violent, or of which the lines are amplified or merged in a harmonious picture.

The character of the language, of the metres, and of the style is so marked that there is among all the poems a likeness which does not escape monotony. These poets modulate their voices very slightly and lack the alternatives of solemnity and lightness. Their joy weighs as heavy as their sorrow, their irony is brutal as a blow from a sledge-hammer. The traditional form and the single line give an air of grandeur to particular poems, but imprison and restrict individual initiative. Throughout the three centuries for which Anglo-Saxon literature is known, hardly an approach can be perceived to that differentiation of *genres* which is the sign of vitality and progress. The epic unity of form and tone is at first impressive, but its continued tension grows wearisome, and the periphrastic accompaniment enriches but overweights and obscures the style. None the less, this is a strong and an impressive poetic form. It remains to examine the value of the themes which it clothes.

5. *The Poems which refer to the pre-Christian Epoch: 'Widsith,' 'Deor,' 'Beowulf.'*—The Anglo-Saxon poems in which the traditions of the pagan epoch have been preserved are both the most beautiful in themselves and the most interesting to us. It has been seen that we cannot expect ever to find in them a direct picture of pre-Christian times, since they were compiled or edited some time between the eighth and tenth centuries by clerks who knew Latin, whose minds were coloured by Christian morality, and who had access to some models from Graeco-Roman literature. Yet the authors of these poems had kept the old passion for adventure, together with the memory of the wild life of their

not have been aware—by certain extraneous preoccupations of conduct, or by a sense of the requirements of the heart. Perhaps it is even the unestablished, absolute force of some mystical belief which, like a secret inner light, directs their efforts. Abraham Tucker[1] is a type of those thinkers, often met with in England, whose untrained faculties possess a natural vigour, though they are as incapable of methodical reasoning as of a systematic explanation of their ideas. He exemplifies in a very suggestive way the obscure conflict that is being waged in the spiritual mind of his epoch—the struggle between the need to understand and that which calls for a belief without definite proofs. Paley, in other respects, is no less significant a figure; he had a greater circle of readers, and thus materially influenced the religious beliefs not only of his own generation but of several, by bringing to the cult of religion a sense of certitude that was at once rational and unassailable. Paley's well-trained thinking achieves a logical order; his doctrine, however, lacks originality, for he reproduces that of Butler in a more superficial plane, by tracing the existence of God to the many signs of an organization in the things around us; while his theory of virtue serves to emphasize and ormulate the instinctive utilitarian tendencies of the average eligious conscience.

And, as a matter of fact, during the whole of this period here is a general trend in questions of morality towards utilirianism. Already before the close of the century, Bentham mes to the fore as the leader of a group of philosophers who ll thoroughly develop the consequences of this cult of the eful; but in order to follow the progress of their doctrine we st turn to the years after 1800, that is to say, to the next , to which this group really belongs.[2] The keen desire to at the basic principles governing conduct is very much in lence with the contemporaries of Hume. The great sceptic self had admitted that the feeling of sympathy which he to be a primordial fact of conscious experience, directly rise to approbation or blame for the actions of others, that from such a germ all the duties of man could spring; he further defined this feeling of fellowship as a natural

raham Tucker (1705–74), a country squire: *The Light of Nature Pursued*, 4. William Paley (1743–1805), the most popular of the English theolo- the early nineteenth century: *Principles of Moral and Political Philoso-* 85; *Horae Paulinae*, 1790; *View of the Evidences of Christianity*, 1794; *Theology*, 1804. *Works*, 1825.

Book v Chap. II.

ancestors and the ancestral legends and verses. There is a certain analogy between their state of mind and that which the nineteenth century called Romanticism. From a distance, through the medium of their purified feelings, they caressed with their melancholy their dream of the past. They were civilized men

nated it with

nobly retracir

expurgating the perverse Arthurian legend. They often recast the poems which a tradition, doubtless oral, had handed down to them, suppressing whatever shocked their consciences, and *intercalating new passages or adding edifying conclusions.*

The short poems *Widsith* [1] and *Deor* lift a corner of the veil which hides the past. They purport to be the songs of two scops or poets living on the Continent in an age already fabulous. Widsith or 'Great Traveller' has wandered much

Attila's, the second third of the sixth century instead of the middle of the fourth, so that Widsith is plainly no historical figure but a typical scop who is an excuse for bringing together names famous in history and legend. The enumeration of Germanic tribes is valuable to historical geography, and the literary attraction consists almost entirely in the lustre of

Both Hrothgar, who

ted in the *Nibelungen-*

gives an idea of the wandering minstrels who went from court to court, singing the praises of the princes from whom they received or expected largesse. It concludes as follows:

> Thus the gleemen
> Say in song their need, speak aloud their thankword!
> Always South or Northward someone they encounter,
> Who,—for he is learned in lays, lavish in his giving—
> Would before his men of might magnify his sway,
> Manifest his earlship,
> Till all flits away—
> Life and light together—land who getteth so
> Hath beneath the heaven high established power.[2]

[1] R. W. Chambers, *Widsith, a Study in Old English Mediaeval Legend* (Cambridge, 1912).

[2] Stopford Brooke's translation.

The Lament of Deor is the effusion of a more sedentary and less happy scop than Widsith, one disgraced by his lord who has preferred his rival, but consoled for his ill luck by recollection of the normal inconstancy of fortune. He recalls heroes and gods who were not spared tribulations, and concludes every strophe—this is the only Anglo-Saxon poem which has this strophic form—with a sort of refrain:

That he overwent; *this* also may I.[1]

But the only poem which attempts a picture of the primitiv age on a large scale is *The Lay of Beowulf*.[2] The date of th compilation of this work makes it the most ancient epic of th Teutonic world, and historically its subject takes us back t the first half of the sixth century. It speaks of the victory o the Franks over the Goths led by Hygelac (the Cochilaicus c Gregory of Tours), which occurred about 512–520, a fight i which the young warrior Beowulf, one of the defeated army, said to have distinguished himself by strength and valour.

Neither the subject nor the characters are in any wa peculiarly Anglo-Saxon. Not only is there no question of th island of Great Britain, where the Anglo-Saxons were estal lished as early as the fifth century, but there is also no mentic of the lands near the Elbe which they inhabited previousl The scene is, by turns, the Danish island Seeland and t country of the Geats or Goths in the south of present Swede and Beowulf, the hero, is a Geat. This is thus no natior epic; even if the common origin of the tribes be taken in account, it is remarkable that almost at the moment at whi an unknown Anglo-Saxon poet was commemorating his f bears of Scandinavia, the still pagan people of that count were beginning their redoubtable descents upon the shores Great Britain, visiting upon the Anglo-Saxons the very which these had once inflicted on the Britons. The quest arises, therefore, whether *Beowulf* be not an adaptation i Anglo-Saxon of a Scandinavian legend, a hypothesis s ported by the fact that the chief incidents of the story Beowulf, the slayer of monsters, recur in the Icelandic s

[1] Stopford Brooke's translation.

[2] Ed. by F. Klaeber (3rd ed., Boston, 1936); W. J. Sedgefield (3rd Manchester, 1935); A. J. Wyatt (3rd ed., revised by R. W. Chambers, (bridge, 1925). Translations by J. R. Clark Hall (prose, 2nd ed., 1911) F. B. Gummere (verse, New York, 1909). See R. W. Chambers, *Beowulf* ed., Cambridge, 1932); J. Hoops, *Kommentar zum Beowulf* (Heidelberg, 1 Walter Thomas, *L'Épopée anglo-saxonne* (1924).

of Grettir. It is, however, plain to any one who has read the prose and metrical sagas of the north, that *Beowulf* has a markedly different tone and turn of narrative from these works, that in it their wildness has been tamed, and that it has a predominating moral tendency, and lacks the violent strangeness of Norse literature. On the other hand, by feeling and imagination, as well as by language, *Beowulf* comes very

Certain episodes and, above all, a sustained noble gravity of

triumphs over monsters for theme, and about whom purely historical beings and scenes should form a frame for the story. There is a striking incongruity between the realism of some pictures—the descriptions of banquets and still pagan funeral rites—and the obstinate idealism which gradually turns the strong-
court i
counsel
adventurous romances are foreshadowed in *Beowulf*, although the poet never abandons the noble epic tone and seems to feel it beneath him to minister to mere curiosity.

Every incongruity which analysis can discover disappears in the movement and the style of the poem. In spite of grave structural faults, the use not of one but of three successive stories, in spite of a monotonous and slightly childish theme, the work is that of an artist. Its sustained dignity and regular, rather restricted march is such that some critics, comparing it with the poems of Scandinavia, have been impelled to see in it the influence of classical antiquity.

Beowulf, with some valiant Geats, comes to the help of

order to seize and devour one of the king's companions In a terrible hand-to-hand struggle, Beowulf tears off an arm of this monster, who is mortally wounded and flees to his den to die, whereupon all is joy in victory and deliverance.

But Grendel's mother avenges her son. She renews the attacks on Heorot, and Beowulf resolves to go forth to fight her in her home. Diving after her into the waters of a sinister lake, he meets her in combat in the cave in which she dwells beneath the waters. When he is all but worsted he seizes a magic sword which hangs on the wall, and plunges it in the body of the fearful beast, and then, when the Danes believe that he has already fallen a victim to his daring, he returns to Heorot in triumph, bearing Grendel's gigantic head.

He becomes king of the Geats and reigns over them gloriously for fifty years. But some jewels are stolen from an ancient treasure guarded by a dragon, who thereupon sets out in fury to devastate the king's realm, burning with his flaming and pestilential breath all that lies in his path. Beowulf slays the dragon and saves his people, but he is himself mortally wounded during the encounter by the monster's venomous tooth, and he dies nobly, consoled by the thought that he has sacrificed himself for his subjects, and that he is bequeathing to them the incomparable treasure which has been in the dragon's keeping. He has, however, been forsaken during the fight by all his thegns but one, and great evils are prophesied for the Geats bereft of their king.

It is seen that the labours of Beowulf are far from attaining to the ingenious variety of those of Hercules. All the monsters he meets in combat are equally fearful and vague; the horror is produced by their mysterious outline, the night which surrounds them, and the sinister places they inhabit. The description of the marshes in which Grendel's mother dwells is perhaps the most famous passage in the poem. A sombre imagination and the sadness of a northern landscape have united to paint this powerful picture. But the sadness is not confined to the references to nature. It is diffused throughout the poem, never absent from it. It recurs in elegiac form in the episode of the origin of the treasure, which was buried by the last survivor of a proud family, and came into the dragon's possession. Even in the intoxication of fierce battle and of the hero's victory, sadness is perceptible. There are constant allusions to the nothingness of life, of courage and of glory, and although Beowulf is in every point a hero, the ideal of an active force serving good and triumphing over evil, the poem does not convey that effect of fortifying energy which might be expected of it. This poem which is a glorification of bold enterprise leaves a bitter taste, or at least an impression

of universal melancholy. It makes life seem sad, effort vain. The reason for this must be sought in its atmosphere. It takes one into a dark place whither the sun's clear light does not penetrate, where fogs and unwholesome vapours are never quite dissipated by the sun's rays A certain joy in life is needed to make a work of imagination healthy, but Beowulf, or rather the poet who narrates his adventures, has introduced the Christian idea of earthly life among his gloomy scenery, has plumbed the emptiness of mortality, and found it of little worth at the very moment at which he celebrates mortal glory. This is indeed a poem which has come out of a cold cell in a Northumbrian cloister. It breathes the air of the tomb.

6. *Lyrical and Elegiac Poems:*[1] *'The Ruined Burg,' 'The Lover's Message,' 'The Maiden's Complaint,' 'The Wanderer,' 'The Seafarer.'*—The melancholy which weighs upon *Beowulf*, especially on its latter part, often recurs in several undated short poems, which are distinguished from those already mentioned by a complete severance of ties with the Continent and a break with pagan tradition. All the same, these poems are not distinctively Christian; rather they are Christian only in some of their details and in their conclusion. They are laments, usually desolate. Their voice is something like that heard in the so-called 'Songs of Ossian,' with which Macpher-

since been given.

There is, for instance, a complaint written on the ruins of an old town which might be Bath, the watering-place which was so magnificent in Roman times, before the Saxon invaders destroyed it. A poet comes to visit the remains of this splendid town, long after the days of its splendour, and is grieved by the sight of the 'ruined burg.'

> Many were the mead-halls, full of mirth of men,
> Till the strong-willed Wyrd whirled that all to change[2]

The poem is a series of monotonous laments in which the word recurs incessantly like an inevitable refrain.

[1] N. Kershaw, *Anglo-Saxon and Norse Poems* (Cambridge, 1922)
[2] Stopford Brooke's translation.

There is also a series of lyrical poems, or rather elegies, which are more intimate and have reached us in the guise of personal effusions, but which are so obscure that the question has arisen whether they are not detached parts of longer romantic compositions. The habitual melancholy is missing only in one of them, *The Lover's Message*, in which an exile sends a message to his love by means of runes carved on a wooden tablet. By a fiction in harmony with the enigmatic style affected by this poetry, the wood itself is made to speak, to relate its origin in a forest and its voyage on a ship, and to marvel that man has been able to give it a tongue. This wood is employed by the lover to ask the maiden to join him in his place of exile where he has become powerful and prosperous and will surely make her happy.

> Soon as ever thou shalt listen on the edges of the cliff
> To the cuckoo in the copse-wood chanting of his sorrow,
> Then begin to seek the sea, where the sea-mew is at home.[1]

More obscure, but richer in feeling, is the elegy which might be called *The Wife's* or *Maiden's Complaint*, were it certainly the utterance of a slandered woman who laments that she is banished from the neighbourhood of her love. Equally well, however, it may be the complaint of a young thegn kept from joining his dear and exiled lord. The singer's suffering is caused by her faithfulness. She has been condemned to dwell in a cave 'in a grove amid this wood,' and thence, 'in the early dawning' she comes alone to spend a whole summer day mourning her griefs beneath the shelter of an oak. She dreams of her beloved, who also is consumed by sorrow and who is often compelled to assume an air of gladness. She imagines him sitting 'under the o'erhanging cliff, overfrosted by the storm,' where he endures

> Anguish mickle of the mind, far too oft remembers him
> Of a happier home![1]

The elegy *The Wanderer*, of fuller scope, is certainly a song of friendship. A young thegn has been obliged, after the death of his beloved lord, to seek another protector beyond the seas. His dreams on the path which leads to exile are sad.

> And it seemeth to him in spirit, that he seeth his man-lord,
> Clippeth him and kisseth him, on his knee he layeth
> Hands and head alike, as when he from hour to hour,
> Erewhile, in the older days, did enjoy the gift-stool.

---

[1] Stopford Brooke's translation.

Then the friendless man forthwith doth awaken

As, however, he considers that vicissitudes of fortune overtake even chiefs and that misery is common to all men, he understands that his grief is but a part of the universal order of change:

Doom of weirds is changing all the world below the skies[1]

He is like the old warrior who fights over again the battles of his younger days and cries out with Ossian:

Whither went the horse, whither went the man? Whither went the Treasure-giver?
What befel the seats of feasting? Whither fled the joys in hall?[1]

The Seafarer, the most original of the Anglo-Saxon lyrical

dangers, leads to the thought that as the sailor despises well-being on dry land, so man ought to reject earthly pleasures for the happiness which awaits him beyond death? Or is it a poem which has been inspired from two distinct sources, a description of a seaman's rough life to which a pious Christian conclusion has been added?

Is it the monologue of a sailor who, with little order and more than one repetition, descants on his conflicting feelings for the sea, his love and hate, fear and desire? Or is it, as some ingenious critics maintain, a dialogue between an old seaman, who recounts the misery of his life, and a youth who answers

extreme redundancy at least has as nucleus a powerful and realistic impression. Even though the ending is blurred

[1] Stopford Brooke's translation.

whether or not they have known the old Anglo-Sa
song.[1]

7. *The Songs of War: 'Brunanburh,' 'The Battle of Maldo*
—As might be expected, it was in their war songs that

in the prose chronicles, compiled by some monk, to glorify
great victory which Athelstan, King of Wessex and Mer
and his brother, Edward, won at Brunanburh in 937 over
Scots under Constantine and the Northmen whom Anlaf
out of Ireland. The fierce enthusiasm of victory breaks ou
savage irony addressed to the slain or fleeing invaders.
swiftness, even lucidity, of the ode allows the hypoth
that it was one of those popular *cantilenas* which are know
have flourished among the Anglo-Saxons. While the narra
and elegiac poetry is often so obscure that we can ha
believe it to have been meant for the people and underst
by them, we have here a song which it is easy to ima
intoned, and caught up by all the soldiers of the victor
army. The fact that it contains no original detail, that al
circumstances are general, and that it ends with the ol
of Anglo-Sax strengthens
impression th ects with a l
tradition of ich in the

Constantine who came to attack Athelstan after he had sw
fealty to him:

> To his home in the North, Constantinus,
> The hoar war-hero was unable to boast
> Of attendance of men; he was robbed of his kinsmen,
> Bereaved of his friends on the battle-field,
> Conquered in fight, and he left his son

[1] Douady, *La Mer et les poètes anglais* (1912).
[2] Kershaw, op. cit. (*Brunanburh*), W. J Sedgefield, *The Battle of Maldon* (1904); E. V. Gordon, *The Battle of Maldon* (1937).

he rejoices and breaks into laughter, and he dies t

The braver shall thought be, the bolder the heart,
The more the mood, as lessens our might.
Here lieth our lord, all hewn to pieces,
The good on the ground: ever may grieve
Who now from this war-play thinketh to wend
I am old in years: hence will I not,
But here beside mine own dear lord,
So loved a man, I purpose to lie[1]

This *Battle of Maldon* is like some embryonic *R*
Song of Roland earlier than the legend. As in the

Maldon is a strictly historical poem, which does not
its subject and which neither introduces the marvell
leaves room for its introduction by an editor. It is
germ of something greater than itself but the fragm
completed whole. The sentiment of the two works is
almost identical. Byrhtnoth makes it a point of ho
allow the Northmen to ford the river unhindered,
as Roland refuses to sound his horn in order to s

whose last words are for God, the supreme leader of w
and who, because he is valiant and dies in battle, is
God's love.

[1] Translation by J. M. Garnett.

qualities are thrown into relief, its defects momentarily hidden. The poem is powerful and arresting.

9. *Christian Poetry: the Cædmonian Poems*[1] *and 'Judith.'*—In all the poems hitherto examined there is some revelation of Christianity, or at least a certain attenuation of pagan characteristics, but they are not decidedly religious poems either in subject or in immediate intention. We have still to deal with the Christian poetry, properly so called, which is

all the extant collections of Anglo-Saxon verse.

This poetry is proof of the fervour with which, immediately upon their conversion, these Germanic pirates embraced the

there was a brother whom God had honoured with His gifts and who excelled in glorifying piety and virtue in song 'Everything the clerks taught him out of Holy Writ, he soon afterwards reproduced in the English language, in poetic

when he had done thus, and gone from the feast to the stable where he had that night charge of the cattle, there appeared to him in his sleep One who said, greeting him by name, "Sing, Cædmon, some songs to Me." "I cannot sing," he answered, "for this cause left I the feast and came hither." He who talked to him answered, "However that be, you shall

[1] G. P. Krapp, *The Junius Manuscript* (1931), I. Gollancz, *The Cædmon MS. of Anglo-Saxon Biblical Poetry* (Oxford, 1927); F. A. Blackburn, *Exodus and Daniel* (Boston, 1907); C. W. Kennedy, *The Cædmon Poems* (text and translation, 1915).

sing to Me." "What shall I sing?" rejoined Cædmon. "The beginning of created things,' replied He." [1] Then Cædmon sang verses he had never heard to the glory of the Creator:

Now must we praise the Guardian of heaven's kingdom,
The Creator's might, and his mind's thought;
Glorious Father of men! as of every wonder He,
Lord eternal, formed the beginning.
He first framed for the children of earth
The heaven as a roof; holy Creator!
Then mid-earth, the Guardian of mankind,
The eternal Lord, afterwards produced;
The earth for men, Lord Almighty.[2]

Cædmon awoke, remembered the words of the song he had composed in sleep, and added to it many others, all to the glory of God. Then he went to the reeve of his village and told him of the gift he had received from Heaven, and the reeve took him before the abbess, who assembled all the clerks and bade Cædmon sing to them. All were agreed 'that a heavenly grace had been conferred on him by the Lord. They translated for Cædmon a passage in Holy Writ, bidding him, if he could, put the same into verse. The next morning he gave it them, composed in excellent verse, whereon the abbess, understanding the divine grace in the man, bade him quit the secular habit and take on him the monastic life. . . . He kept in mind everything that was taught to him, and as beasts of the field ruminate, so he turned it into melodious song, so sweet to the ear that his teachers became his hearers. He sang of the creation of the world, of the origin of man, and of all the history of Israel, of their departure from Egypt and entering into the Promised Land, and other passages of Holy Scripture, the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection of Christ, and His ascension to Heaven, the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles. He sang also of the terror of future judgment, the horrors of hell-pangs and the joys of heaven.'

There is nothing in the Christian poems to approach the charm of Bede's artless story, as appears if his short, very representative quotation of verse be compared to his Latin prose, with its wealth of precise circumstance which gives everything a character. In the verse there are no facts. Their place is taken by ejaculations, repetitions, and periphrases. Scholarship no longer admits the extant poems, written on the subjects Bede enumerates, to be the direct work of Cædmon,

[1] J. R. Green's translation. [2] B. Thorpe's translation.

and the too complete assimilation of the Bible makes for life and vehemence, but there is monotony in these poets' imagination, which unfailingly reduces the whole of the world's contents to two or three sentiments and two or three unvarying descriptions.

If, for a moment, these Anglo-Saxon poems are not read indulgently, if we cease to make allowances for them, almost as we do for the sketches of children and savage peoples, but, like some critics, overpraise them, the heavy pompousness of the paraphrases at once becomes evident, in contrast to the sober and sublime vigour of the Bible; and Ten Brink is seen to be guilty of flattery when he says that 'the originality of the Anglo-Saxon poet of *Genesis* is revealed only in detail and execution. The simple, terse expression of the Scriptural narrative is exchanged for a broad, often impassioned, epic style.' Very often, the Anglo-Saxon has overlaid beauties not apparent to him with the weight of his words:

The Bible	*The Paraphrase*
And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.	The earth as yet was not green with grass; Ocean cover'd, swart in eternal night, Far and wide, the dusky ways. Then was the glory-bright Spirit of heaven's guardian Borne over the deep, with utmost speed: The Creator of angels bade, the Lord of life, Light to come forth over the spacious deep. Forthwith was fulfilled the High King's command; For him was holy light spread over the waste, As the Worker had ordered.[1]

Indisputably, the Anglo-Saxon diverges from his model; he is himself. But the sum of his originality is his promiscuous piling-up of words, which hides, rather than reveals, the great outline of the primitive chaos. Above all, it drags out the act of creation, which showed the might of God by its very swiftness. The God of the Anglo-Saxon fumbles awkwardly before He lights up the world. There could be no better lesson on the difference between grandiose verbosity and the true sublime.

[1] B. Thorpe's translation.

The effect is not accidental. It recurs in almost every passage of this paraphrase, which partial critics quote with approval. *Exodus* has the same defect, that of detailed description which aims at grandeur and misses sublimity. The Bible says:

'And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the

way' of the Anglo-Saxon poet in the paraphrase, but it is a very childish realism, which consists in making Moses describe the phenomenon to his people as he accomplishes it.

> 'Lo! ye now with your eyes behold,
>
> Rugged army-roads; the sea hath left
> Its old stations; where I before have never heard,
> Over mid-earth, men to journey,
> Are variegated fields, which until this time,
> Through eternity, the waves have covered [1]

Thus the great wizard, whose silent gesture had worked the miracle, is changed into an artless gossip whom the miracle seems to amaze as much as it does his people.

Although the later poet who paraphrased *Judith*,[2] and who deserves gratitude for his choice of this admirable book of

The biblical Judith never says a word which does not lead straight to action; the Saxon Judith wraps her thought in periphrases, so that ... peats herself interminably. ... each us through a fog of ... two texts—for instance, when she beseeches the Lord for help before she strikes Holofernes, or when, returning to Bethulia

[1] B. Thorpe's translation.
[2] A. S. Cook, *Judith* (with English translation, Boston, 1904).

lived or his place of birth. While he seems to have been born in Northumbria, his verses, like all those of his fellow-countrymen, have reached us in the dialect of the West Saxons.

It can hardly be disputed that Cynewulf's reputation with critics has gained by the pleasure of discovery. It is not uncommon in these days to hear him compared to William Cowper or even Dante. His *Christ*, which seemed to its first editor a tissue of obscurely tangled threads, is to-day translated, annotated, and published like a classic. The severity with which Cynewulf's work must be estimated is made indispensable by the extravagance of the praise given to it.

Of the probable writings of Cynewulf—that is, of those which contain his runic signature—the *Christ* alone is original, at least in part. Its seventeen hundred lines have been disentangled by scholarship to show a composition in three parts, a sort of triptych which celebrates the Advent of Christ, that is, his birth, his going-away or Ascension, and his second coming at the Last Judgment. Even after patient study has marked this distribution of the poem into parts, it is difficult to read it without losing the thread on every page, so profound is the obscurity of the thought and so hesitating the march of the narrative. The obscurity is a little due to the loss of the beginning of the poem, but much more to the radical weakness of a befogged intelligence, led away by words rather than guided by ideas. Cynewulf's verses are vague effusions, based on anthems, homilies, and hymns, and they suffer by a comparison with their frequently sublime originals, even more than do the Cædmonian paraphrases when these are put side by side with the words of the Bible.

This is proved if the third *passus* of the *Christ*, the fullest and most imposing of the three, be examined. Its basis is the admirable hymn, *De Die Judicii*, formerly ascribed to Saint Gregory, which is itself no more than a metrical version of one of the most beautiful chapters of the Gospels, the twenty-fifth of Saint Matthew. Out of its twenty-three distichs Cynewulf makes eight hundred lines, and the sole effect of his vast additions is to draw a thick veil over the sober grandeur of the images, to obliterate the sublime unity of thought and sentiment, and to surround with darkness the central idea so brilliantly clear in Christ's dialogue with the righteous and wicked: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'

It is hardly credible that although Cynewulf has kept this

thought, he does not seem to have perceived its grandeur, to such a point has he smothered it with trite and commonplace developments. It is possible to read the third *passus* without noticing it.

Even those of Cynewulf's images which have been most praised by his commentators are often no more than weak embroideries on the severe and strong outline of his original. It takes him ten lines to render the first distich, 'Suddenly the great day of the Lord will come, Like a thief in the dark night falling upon unwitting sleepers,' and he adds to it only words, not a single exact circumstance. Or else, with thick, prosaic commentary, he drags out a phrase which impresses by its brevity. 'The glorious King will sit upon His heavenly throne, Surrounded by the trembling (*tremebunda*) ranks of His angels,' is rendered by Cynewulf as follows:

> Heaven's angels' King holy shall shine,
> Glorious o'er the hosts, the powerful God;
> [illegible]
>
> Shall sorely dread, when the holy race,
> White and heaven-bright, the archangel-host,
> Before that countenance is with dread affrighted[1]

Even where he depicts the catastrophe of the Last Day, winning high praise from the critics for poetic power, and giving himself free rein, it is hard to discern anything in his work but [illegible]

tained that all the many signs and incoherent complaints of [illegible]

worth its price

The runic signature of the same Cynewulf occurs in a *Saint Juliana* and a *Saint Helen*, poems which are pleasantly differen-

[1] B. Thorpe's translation.

c

tiated from the *Christ* by their continuous story and the respite they afford from vague effusiveness. Two other lives of saints, Saint Andreas and Saint Guthlac, once also attributed to Cynewulf by some critics, are now denied to him. The absolute decision of this question of authorship, when the author concerned is so hypothetical a person, has little importance. It is more interesting to establish the distinguishing characteristics of hagiography in Anglo-Saxon verse.

Saint Juliana, Saint Helen, and Saint Andreas are exotic saints, whose legends, doubtless transcribed from Greek into Latin, have been, on the whole, faithfully followed by the Anglo-Saxon poets. All of them have an oriental element of the marvellous, evidently seductive to the Anglo-Saxon imagination, a taste which was to affect profane literature also, and to make the English the first translators of the complicated romance of *Apollonius of Tyre*, whence Shakespeare drew the incidents of his *Pericles*. Since invention had hardly any part in the writing of these lives of saints, their principal value, beyond the few modifications of the stories, is to show what were the themes which appealed to the imagination of their authors.

The life of Saint Juliana, a Christian maiden of Nicomedia, victorious over the demon Belial, who tries vainly to tempt her, and a martyr to her faith, is distinguished by the clearness and swiftness of the story. But the pace involves dryness and an absence of poetry and emotion.

The life of Saint Elene or Saint Helen is told more expansively. The story is that of the Invention of the True Cross by the mother of the Emperor Constantine after his victory over the Huns [*sic*]. Constantine's warlike expedition, the battle, and Helen's voyage over the sea to Judaea give scope for the traditional descriptive effects, so that the native verse is in its element and easily falls into the epic mood.

Saint Andreas is the most crowded and the most Byzantine of these legends. Long analysis would be necessary to exhaust the list of the saint's miracles on his way to deliver the apostle, Saint Matthew, held captive by the cannibal Myrmidons. He crosses a raging sea, Christ being, without his knowledge, the pilot of his boat; an invisible form, he enters the dungeon in which Saint Matthew lies; the cannibals are infuriated when their prisoner is set free; Saint Andreas is tortured but remains invulnerable; he avenges himself by the flood which he lets loose upon the town by an order to one of the columns of his

d up to their arm-pits, are cast into its breach; the ded Myrmidons undergo mass conversion

se are only some of the incidents which swarm in the een hundred lines of the poem. The exuberant wealth penings saves *Saint Andreas* from the diffuse wordiness t Anglo-Saxon Christian poems. It is less diluted than of them. The unknown author is nevertheless to be ted of a rhetoric not so innocent as that of his pre- ors. As Stopford Brooke has well said, he is a 'sensa- st.' So, truth to tell, is Cynewulf, when in *Saint Helen* s up in cold blood the periphrases he loves too well stained with crimes,' he says when he is confessing his till the Lord my . . . bone-house unbound, breastlock nd, song-craft unlocked.'

y are strange, these poems. The web of the Byzantine ces is studded with heavy Anglo-Saxon jewellery.

ides the lives of these exotic saints, there is one of a

religious feeling of the past. Guthlac, the son of a n noble and born near the end of the seventh century, come a hermit, and has built himself a hut in a lonely in the midst of wide marshlands north of the Granta. he is tormented by hideous demons, 'who speak the

tiated from the *Christ* by their continuous story and the respite they afford from vague effusiveness. Two other lives of saints, Saint Andreas and Saint Guthlac, once also attributed to Cynewulf by some critics, are now denied to him. The absolute decision of this question of authorship, when the author concerned is so hypothetical a person, has little importance. It is more interesting to establish the distinguishing characteristics of hagiography in Anglo-Saxon verse.

Saint Juliana, Saint Helen, and Saint Andreas are exotic saints, whose legends, doubtless transcribed from Greek into Latin, have been, on the whole, faithfully followed by the Anglo-Saxon poets. All of them have an oriental element of the marvellous, evidently seductive to the Anglo-Saxon imagination, a taste which was to affect profane literature also, and to make the English the first translators of the complicated romance of *Apollonius of Tyre*, whence Shakespeare drew the incidents of his *Pericles*. Since invention had hardly any part in the writing of these lives of saints, their principal value, beyond the few modifications of the stories, is to show what were the themes which appealed to the imagination of their authors.

The life of Saint Juliana, a Christian maiden of Nicomedia, victorious over the demon Belial, who tries vainly to tempt her, and a martyr to her faith, is distinguished by the clearness and swiftness of the story. But the pace involves dryness and an absence of poetry and emotion.

The life of Saint Elene or Saint Helen is told more expansively. The story is that of the Invention of the True Cross by the mother of the Emperor Constantine after his victory over the Huns [*sic*]. Constantine's warlike expedition, the battle, and Helen's voyage over the sea to Judaea give scope for the traditional descriptive effects, so that the native verse is in its element and easily falls into the epic mood.

Saint Andreas is the most crowded and the most Byzantine of these legends. Long analysis would be necessary to exhaust the list of the saint's miracles on his way to deliver the apostle, Saint Matthew, held captive by the cannibal Myrmidons. He crosses a raging sea, Christ being, without his knowledge, the pilot of his boat; an invisible form, he enters the dungeon in which Saint Matthew lies; the cannibals are infuriated when their prisoner is set free; Saint Andreas is tortured but remains invulnerable; he avenges himself by the flood which he lets loose upon the town by an order to one of the columns of his

prison to scatter torrents of water; his wrath is appeased by the prayers of the terrified people; he commands the mountain to be riven, and the waters, into which the people had been plunged up to their arm-pits, are cast into its breach; the astounded Myrmidons undergo mass conversion.

These are only some of the incidents which swarm in the seventeen hundred lines of the poem. The exuberant wealth [illegible] wordiness [illegible] luted than [illegible] less to be suspected of a rhetoric not so innocent as that of his predecessors. As Stopford Brooke has well said, he is a 'sensationalist.' So, truth to tell, is Cynewulf, when in *Saint Helen* he piles up in cold blood the periphrases he loves too well. 'I was stained with crimes,' he says when he is confessing his sins, 'till the Lord my . . . bone-house unbound, breastlock unwound, song-craft unlocked.'

They are strange, these poems. The web of the Byzantine romances is studded with heavy Anglo-Saxon jewellery.

Besides the lives of these exotic saints, there is one of a [illegible]

brief attention, for it confirms and completes certain observatic [illegible]

of [illegible]

Felix, is worthy of a place beside the life of another saint which is told by Bede, that of Saint Cuthbert. It is rich in legends which are of the soil of Great Britain, redolent of artless popular beliefs. To read it is to feel oneself at the very source of the religious feeling of the past. Guthlac, the son of a Mercian noble and born near the end of the seventh century, has become a hermit, and has built himself a hut in a lonely island in the midst of wide marshlands north of the Granta. There he is tormented by hideous demons, 'who speak the [illegible]

animals worthy of Saint Francis of Assisi. The birds tamed by his kindness are all about him. He loves the beasts, knows

their ways, talks to them, is really saddened if they are guilty of an unjust or malicious action.

His life in prose is full of true charm and fragrance. Together with the stories by Bede which have been mentioned, it gives an idea of the rich material which the ingenuous faith of this country and these ages offered to religious poetry. But the metrical life of Saint Guthlac makes a painful impression of emptiness. All that was concrete and picturesque in the Latin prose has given place, in these verses, to an exalted treatment of the subject which makes it unintelligible to a reader without other knowledge of it. The story has no thread; there are no outlines; everything is confused. The struggle with the demons has become an abstract argument. Even the second part of the poem, which deals with the death of the saint and has moments of beauty, cannot still the regret for the exactness of the prose original. Here again is evidence of the sins of this oppressive rhetoric, which so rarely allows the Anglo-Saxon poets to express themselves simply.

II. *Other Christian Poems: 'The Dream of the Rood,' the Bestiary,' 'The Phoenix.' Didactic Poems.*—The Christian poetry of the Anglo-Saxons is not all comprised in the biblical paraphrases and the lives of the saints. It also includes some noteworthy poems of a different kind.

It has been seen that Cynewulf was led by his devotion to the Cross to choose the legend of Saint Helen as a subject, and it is tempting to see in him the author of *The Dream of the Rood*, since such a dream is said to have determined his conversion. To personify the Holy Cross was a natural tendency of faith, more than once manifest in the Latin verses of the clerks. Thus in Saint Fortunatus's admirable and impassioned hymn, *Vexilla Regis prodeunt*, the poet's love is moved by the wood of the Cross which the cruel lance has stricken and which flows with blood and water. 'Beautiful and shining tree . . . chosen the holy limbs to touch, blessed Cross from whose arms hung the Ransom of the World. . . . Hail, Cross, sole hope! . . .'

The same sentiment and the same image have inspired the Anglo-Saxon poet. Incapable of the concentrated ar[illegible] of Saint Fortunatus, he has at least a [illegible] his own, not so diffuse as to be witho[ut] [illegible]es the miraculous tree, by turns shining with jewels and bathed in blood. It speaks to him and relates to him its life from the day when it was struck dow[n]

on the verge of the forest, to that on which 'the young Hero, brave and strong,' was lifted on to it, and it trembled as it received the kiss of God in Man. It is now honoured by men, [illegible]

[illegible]

Middle Ages, called *Physiologi* in Latin. Anglo-Saxon is the first vernacular language in which a *Bestiary* occurs, a mere fragment embracing the Panther, the Whale, and part of a passage on the Partridge. Anglo-Saxon verse lends itself to this poetic form much as it does to the riddle. The same stretch of imagination is needed. The description of the Whale—Fastitocalon, who is as large as an island, so that confiding ships anchor on his sides and sailors land on his back, to kindle a fire and feast—is on a scale which Milton repeats. Naturally, the enormous beast chooses the very instant at which pleasure reaches its height to plunge into the sea, taking ship and sailors with him. Even so the devil plays with the souls of men, duping them with his false lures that he may the better carry them off to hell.

The Phoenix is an independent poem, but it is very like these others in character. The fourth-century poet Lactantius, taking his subject from Ovid and Claudian, had transformed the mythological phoenix, which burnt itself to be reborn of its own ashes, into a symbol of Christ and the Christian soul. His short Latin poem, *Phoenix*, is a work of eighty-five distichs, conventional in style, a mosaic of the classical poets which is spoilt by its dryness and its too enigmatic turn.

This time the Anglo-Saxon poet, who has expended the theme to seven hundred lines, has the advantage over his model. Anglo-Saxon plenty here relieves happily the effects of a Latin drought. The poet brings new moving warmth into his treatment of a subject which mythological memories and terms had frozen to lifelessness. Instead of getting further away from nature, as he diverges from his model, [illegible]

of the Latin. It is true that either northern impotence or Anglo-Saxon rhetoric has made the poet unequal to painting a flowery and sunny place of delights, and that he is most at ease when he is paraphrasing the list of the scourges which this Eden is spared. But even in this too negative description there is more charm than the poets of his country were wont to put into their pictures. His smooth and ample verses succeed better than those of Lactantius in suggesting the marvellous harmony of the songs of the Phoenix. The ardent homily with which the poem ends is a commentary on Lactantius's last line: 'Aeternam vitam mortis adepta bono'—which has a strong precision beyond the later poet. But the homily has an unction and a melody which finally make this poem probably the most attractive of all those written in alliterative verse.

This survey of the Christian poetry must include several short didactic pieces, the *Gifts of Men*, the *Weirds of Men*, and *Ten Instructions of a Father to his Son.* In these, Anglo-Saxon poetry is sententious. The *Dialogues between Solomon and Saturn*, in which the fantastic varies the didactic, are more curious. They are imitations of a lost Latin original, itself taken from a vanished Greek source, and are the prototypes of the dialogues between Solomon and Marcolf which were so popular in the Middle Ages. Saturn, who has nothing in common with the god of mythology, is a Chaldean prince sprung from a family of demons. He is acquainted with all books but not with the magic of the *Pater Noster*, which he makes Solomon explain to him.

It is not always in such amusing fictions that Christian morality finds expression. It loves to bring before men lugubrious images of death and decomposition, to humiliate the body which constantly leads the soul to stray from the path of salvation. Hence the struggles between body and soul which held so large a place in the imagination of this age of faith. Anglo-Saxon poetry soon took possession of this theme, of which the cruelty was aggravated by the habitual heaviness of alliterative verse. Thus it is with the *Discourse of the Soul to its Body*. The soul inveighs against the body, already corrupt and the prey of the voracious worm with jaws sharper than the needle, which once tempted it to the sins for which it now suffers the pains of hell. The soul, in revenge, describes with savage joy the decomposition of the fatal body.

The grave is similarly evoked at the end of a volume of

homilies, but this time it is Death who speaks and with sombre realism calls up the picture of man's last abode.

It is true that these images cannot be taken as peculiar to the Anglo-Saxon imagination. They are essentially Christian and also, it may be said, representative of the gloomiest of the Christian centuries. It is, however, impossible not to notice how aptly the rude verse and violent rhetoric of the Anglo-Saxons render their dismay and emphasize their horror.

12. *Anglo-Saxon Prose. Alfred, Ælfric, Wulfstan.*[1]—The

determined. It retains many periphrases and locutions already obsolete, imitates and systematizes the disorder of primitive lyrical construction. The poetic form tends towards the past.

On the other hand, the tendency of the prose is towards

surprising in the fact that the prose writings of the Anglo-Saxons, which are much less curious than their poetry, are also much nearer ourselves.

Alfred's pages from those of

There is a change but no l

comparatively easy to understand their prose.

which were promulgated at the end of the seventh century, although our transcription dates only from the time of

Alfred—or because some of this prose is more than half poetry and seems to be fragments of old epic tales. This character belongs to many passages of the chronic[illegible] attributed to the influence of King Alfred, of which w[illegible] written by the religious of different monasteries, those of Winchester, Canterbury, Abingdon, Worcester, and Peterborough; the last-named having continued its narrative to the middle of the twelfth century. In this chronicle several references to early times, brief but impressively vehement, are pagan in feeling and emphasis and seem to date from the pre-Christian period. Even in the references to the eighth century there are a suddenness and a roughness in the narrative which betray that mental and grammatical habits were still empirical. It is continually necessary to complete the ellipses and to relate the pronouns to their proper subjects, as with a story told by a small child. For instance, the chronicler relates, as follows, the beginning of the struggle between Cynewulf and Sebright in 755:

> This year Cynewulf took from Sebright his kingdom, and the councillors of the West Saxons [did as much], for unrighteous deeds, except Hamptonshire, and he [that is, Sebright] reigned there [that is, in Hampshire] until he slew the alderman who stayed longest with him. Then Cynewulf drove him to the forest of Andred, where he remained until a swain stabbed him at Privett, and he [that is, the swain] revenged the alderman Cumbra.

The alderman is not named until he is mentioned for the second time.

This formless prose was succeeded at the end of the ninth century by a regular prose, possessed of nearly all its essential parts. Since it is modelled on Latin texts, which are almost literally translated, it is very near English prose, as that was fixed, and also near French prose which was formed under the same masters.

Alfred, the glorious king of Wessex, was the pioneer of the prose-writers.[1] The exclusively poetic or Latin literature which had hitherto flourished had emanated principally from the north-east, the country of the Angles, or from central Mercia. About 800, the supremacy was passing to the south-west, and the king of Wessex was tending toward the sovereignty of all the Germanic groups settled in the island. But the Danish invasions supervened, and with them the

[1] The E.E.T.S. has published Alfred's translations of the *Cura Pastoralis*, ed. Sweet (1871–2), Orosius, ed. Sweet (1883), and Bede, ed. Miller (1890–8). Translation of Boethius, ed. Sedgefield (Oxford, 1899); retranslation by Sedgefield into modern English (ibid., 1900).

ruction of the centres of religion and letters. In the year
it seemed as though nothing would escape the invaders.
as then that the young King Alfred withdrew to Athelney
omerset, formed there a nucleus of resistance, defeated the
es, and won from them a treaty which left him the south
ngland while they remained masters of the old country

oralized clergy had sunk into depths of ignorance. Alfred
for Wessex what Charlemagne, a hundred years earlier,
done for the country of the Franks: he endeavoured to
a the people, and to re-establish Christian discipline and
ure, and to this end he brought foreign monks into his
dom and reformed education. It was under his influence
the earlier poetic works, which had almost all been written
he Northumbrian dialect, were transcribed into the
uage of the West Saxons.

: amplified and given smoothness until they are almost a
inuous story, in which, for instance, the history of the

'ory of Orosius, the compilation which made antiquity

entury, by a reform of the monasteries which was inspired
ıy the similar movement accomplished in France under the

ecular pries[illegible] [illegible] in the
ıonasteries. [illegible]archal
onstitution [illegible] given
o their communities, and therewith very disorderly morals,

e says: 'I have seen and heard many heresies in many an
English book which unlearned men, in their simplicity, took
or great wisdom.' Stories of the saints, replete with the
ıarvellous, and the obsession that the end of the world was
t hand, take up most space in this collection.

It was at this time that the strict rule of Saint Benedict was
ıtroduced. Morals once more became austere. The lives of
he saints did indeed remain the principal subject of study
nd the marvellous continued to fill a large place in them, but
he stories, as compared with their predecessors, were pure
nd even reasonable. Two men who with Alfred are the best
riters of Anglo-Saxon prose are connected with this reform,
Elfric and Wulfstan.[2]

Ælfric
ounded :
leventh

ade his name by his
translations from the
Fathers of the Church which form two series of forty sermons
ach, and commemorate the various saints venerated by the
Anglo-Saxon Church.

Ælfric's prose, unlike that of Alfred, is written not to be

sections, more or less equivalent to the metrical line, and it is frequently alliterative. For this reason scholars were long uncertain whether to classify it as verse or prose. It celebrates the saints, as the scops once sang the deeds of warriors. This poetic prose marks a great advance on that of Alfred. It aims at beauty, measure, and harmony. It is remarkably clear and finished. There is much less awkwardness and effort in the connection of phrases than in Alfred's writings. In fact, the author is consciously literate, even when he is using the vulgar tongue, and he excuses himself, with some shame, for the popular character of his translation of the Latin homilies, pleading the ignorance of his fellow-countrymen.

Wulfstan, who was Archbishop of York from 1002 to 1023, was first of all a preacher. The most remarkable of his homilies dates from 1012, the time when the English were suffering the ills of the Danish invasions. With deep feeling, the homilist deplores the irreligion and immorality of his people, to which he attributes their misfortunes, and he proclaims the near advent of the great chastiser, the Antichrist. Wulfstan is less of a finished artist than Ælfric, but the popular emphasis of his language gives it rich colour and lively tones.

After Wulfstan all was over: the Antichrist came indeed. The Danes became masters of the country, and then, after a short interval of independence, the Anglo-Saxons were brought under the Norman yoke. Such prose writings as we have prove, however, that, even without the Norman Conquest, Anglo-Saxon prose would have taken shape, modelling itself on Latin, and, with the exception of part of its vocabulary, would have become much what it was when in the fourteenth century it regained a place in literature.

It was poetry which was principally affected by the Conquest. The poetic form had outlived its time and had little life left in it. It was conventional and was getting further and further away from the real language of the people. It was fated to be abolished and superseded. The aesthetic ideal was to undergo a change, or rather a revolution. England was to learn to love verse of another kind, other cadences and new subjects. All the rich ornament which profusely decorated verse with a pomp still half barbaric was to go out of fashion. Poets were to shed their periphrases and ejaculations, and gradually to learn sobriety of style and an art almost unknown to them, that of stating facts clearly, grouping them, and inventing stories.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE NORMAN CONQUEST TO CHAUCER (1066–1350)

1. *General Character of Old French Literature.*—The litera
ieal changed at the Norman Conquest of 1066. The co
uerors were, it is true, of the race of the pagan Danes whc
.cursions had for so long afflicted Great Britain, but from t
me they had become masters of the French province whi
as been called Normandy, they had been gallicized with
ıpidity which was prodigious, and had forgotten th
aganism with the country of their origin and its langua
ad traditions. At the time of their conquest of the gre
land they were real Frenchmen, in language and civilizatic
or had they failed to draw into their expedition many
dventurer from neighbouring French provinces.

It was therefore the French literary ideal which th
nported into Great Britain, together with their laws a
dministration. Before their supremacy, the native langua
ceded, was degraded so that it was kept alive only

..ny knowledge of letters was the literature of France.
was in its infancy at the time of the battle of Hastings, b
a rapid growth made it the first of European literatures
the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and spread its glo
and influence far beyond the confines of France. One of i
chief developments took place in Great Britain. Slowly, litt

Complete ignorance of Anglo-Saxon poetry is no barrier
understanding Chaucer, but to be ignorant of French mediev
poetry is to be entirely unacquainted with Chaucer's litera
origins.

There are thus two necessary prefaces to English literatu

and the French is more indispensable than the Anglo-Saxon to comprehension of its final form. It is therefore important to discover which of the most general characteristics of established French literature were such as by their novelty to impress English writers, and by their beauty to persuade them to imitation.[1]

(1) The one of these characteristics which is most widely found, and which is most thrown into relief by a study of Anglo-Saxon, is undoubtedly clarity. To turn from *Beowulf*, or even *The Battle of Maldon*, to the *Chanson de Roland* is to come out of darkness into light. The impression is received from all sides at once. It is an outcome of the subject, the way of telling the story, its spirit and the mind behind it, but above all and always it results from the difference between the two languages. That the old French authors wrote clearly is generally recognized, but it has been too much the fashion to see this gift as merely consequent on the analytical tendencies and logical aptitudes of their thought, and to make it a pretext for assigning prose to them as their province, and denying them the poetic faculty. Their clarity is not, however, purely abstract. It is a veritable light, shining in the dominant vowels, illuminating the best and only noteworthy verses of the troubadours. Some examples must be cited of the success often achieved by any poet who took happy advantage of the genius of the language.

In the old romances we read that:

Bele Erembors a la fenestre au jor
Sor ses genolz tient paile de color.[2]

or that:

Bele Yolanz en chambre koie
Sor ses genoux pailes desploie
Coût un fil d'or, l'autre de soie.[3]

In the *Chanson de Roland* there is the following description of sunlight streaming upon an army:

Esclargiz est li vespres et li jurs;
Contre l'soleil reluisent cil adub;

[1] The analysis of these characteristics is taken from E. Legouis, *Défense de la poésie française à l'usage des lecteurs anglais* (London, 1912).

[2] Fair Erembor at her window in daylight
Holds a coloured silk stuff on her knees.

[3] Fair Yoland in her quiet bower
Unfolds silk stuffs on her knees,
Sewing now a thread of gold, now one of silk.

Osbert e helme i getent grand flambur,
E cil escut ki bien sunt peint a flurs,
E cil espiet, cil oret gonfanun[1]

and this one of Durandal, Roland's sword:

E Durandal, cum ies clere et blanche
Cuntre soleil si reluis et reflambes[2]

Chrestien de Troyes has dazzling passages, and there are the following two lines from Marie de France:

Fils d'or ne gette tel luur
Cum si chevel cuntre li jur.[3]

There is lively, splendid colour in these lines. After the [illegible] ...lf pales if [illegible] ofusion of [illegible] For the Englishmen who knew them, the verses of such as Bernard de Ventadour had even more colour than those in the *langue d'oïl*:

Tant ai mon cor plan de joja
Tot me desnatura,
Flors blanca, vermelh e bloja
Me sembla la froidura[4]

The peculiarity of the *langue d'oïl* was less colour than sheer light, white light or the transparency of water flowing over rock, or of a pure fountain playing on a bed of fine sand. It is a question whether any language has ever been as well [illegible] worth was so well understood by the old French poets that they made it the favourite of their vocabulary, and it gives

[1] The day has cleared up;
The arms shine in the sun;
Hauberk and helm throw forth bright flames,
And the shields finely painted with flowers,
And the spears, and the golden banners.

[2] Eh, Durandal, how clear and white thou art!
So bright dost thou blaze in the sun!

[3] No golden thread shines so bright
As her hair against daylight.

[4] So full of joy is my heart
That it changes all nature for me;
To me the very winter seems
A flower white, ruddy, and blue

atmosphere to their poems. The predilection was shared by Roland's singer, in whose epic it would be interesting to count the lines in which the word occurs, always placed so happily that it makes a picture:

> *Clere* est la lune, les esteiles flambient. . . .
> Tresvait la noit, e apert la *clere* albe. . . .
> Contre le ciel en salt li fous tuz *clers*. . . .
> Parmi la bouche en salt forts li *clers* sancs. . . .[1]

This whiteness is everywhere in the verses of Chrestien de Troyes, as well as in the old romances and pastorals:

> En un vergier, lez une fontenelle
> Dont clere est l'onde et blanche la gravele,
> Siet fille à roi, sa main à sa maxele;
> En sospirant son doux ami rapele.[2]

It was from the perception of this light and the effort to reproduce it that the most beautiful verses of the English language, as renewed in the fourteenth century, were born. It is not only curious, but also highly significant, that the English poets adopted the word *clere* anew, and used it hardly less than their French predecessors and for like effects. Thus Chaucer, in his delicious address to the Virgin:

> Continue on us thy pitous eyen *clere*.

And he begins his most lyrical song with the line:

> Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses *clere*.

He says of the bells hanging on the monk's bridle that they 'ginglen clere,' and everywhere, with this word and many others having the same effect, he gives the impression of a changed atmosphere, one which is more luminous and happier, which, in a word, is French.

(2) It would certainly be wrong to attribute this omnipresent clarity to language only. The aptitude of the writers to seize a luminous detail is as manifest as that of the language to express it and give it value. Something in their taste for well-lit pictures was the outcome of their joy in life, their pleasure in blue sky and sunlight. They never missed an

[1] Bright is the moon, the stars shine out. . . .
The night passes, and the clear dawn appears. . . .
The bright spark springs up to the sky. . . .
From the mouth springs forth the clear blood. . . .

[2] In an orchard, near a springlet
Whose water is clear and gravel white,
Is a king's daughter sitting, with her hand to her chin;
Sighing she calls her sweet love back.

opportunity to shed light upon a picture. *Roland*, which is a song of disaster, is a series of brilliant touches. Clear light falls from the heavens by day and by night. It streams over armies ready to commit slaughter. Colour bursts upon the 'banners, white, blue, and vermilion' (*gonfanons blancs et blois et vermeils*). Nothing is more luminous than Roland's portrait: with clear and laughing face (*le vis cler et riant*),

acclaim it. He sees a warrior's 'spurs of fine gold,' another's 'golden and beflowered shield,' the gems 'flashing' upon the helmet of the emir, whose white beard is like 'blossom,' 'blossom in April,' or 'the blossom of a thorn.' He has picked up the point of light which the teeth of the Ethiopians make in their black faces:

Ne n'unt de blanc ne mais que sul les denz[1]

He admires the sparkle of the beaten metal of armour. Even horrors take on a sort of beauty for him. The mounted warriors wade, up to their bodies, in 'vermilion blood' (*en sanc vermeil*). When a hard blow had been dealt, 'vermilion blood gushes forth up to the arms' (*li sancs vermeilz en volat jusqu'as braz*). The 'clear' blood (*tout cler*) of the dying Oliver springs radiant (*raiet*) out of his body. Thus dazzling pictures are made of the most terrible wounds. The iron of a lance, transfixing a body, hangs it with brilliant pennons:

El cors li met tote l'enseigne bloie.[2]

And we pass continually from this exterior luminosity to the sunshine of the heart which gives light from within.

gloomy and sad countenance is an index of crime, as in the Saracen Abisme:

Plus fel de lui n'out en sa cumpaigne . . .
Unkes nul hume ne l'vit juer ni rire[3]

---

[1] No whiteness have they, save on their teeth.
[2] Thrusts the whole blue standard through his body.
[3] No feller than he was in his company. . . .
No one ever saw him play or laugh.

On the other hand, every one of the righteous has gaiety for his sign, and turns, like Charles, his face to the rising sun:

Turnet sun vis vers le soleil levant.

The games of the French are gay and played in the open air, 'beneath a pine, beside an eglantine.' They sit on 'white silk stuffs.' There is noisy, frivolous merriment among them. Ganelon says of Roland that 'for a single hare he winds his horn all day':

Pur un sul lievre vait tut le jur *cornant*.

Archbishop Turpin's exuberant merriment and his contempt for the monk who spends his time praying rule out every idea of a lugubrious, forbidding religion. Even the love of fighting is no gloomy appetite for slaughter. It is love of movement, noise, colour, and glory. At the end of their life of warfare the fighters have a glimpse of the paradise where they will rest 'among holy flowers' (*en saintes fleurs*), 'crowned and decked with flowers' (*couronnés et fleuris*).

It is true that these men know sorrow:

Mult ad apris ki bien conoist ahan.[1]

These French shed tears easily. They weep and they swoon as Beowulf did not. Just because they get so much joy out of life, they have cause to regret it. They complain, too, of exile from their country:

Tere de France, mult estes dulz païs.[2]

Friend mourns friend. Roland mourns Oliver with impassioned tenderness. Words fail the Beautiful Aude when she learns the death of Roland, and she can but die also. Generally, however, the men are men of action. Never, like the Anglo-Saxon heroes, do they give the impression that the mainspring of life, which is love thereof, is broken. Soon they leave their mourning and make another beginning, once more 'brush forward on their coursing steeds':

Brochent avant sur leurs destriers courants.

Such was the great revelation of early French literature to the Anglo-Saxons. It was the contribution which a race in love with light and life, believing itself God's people, made to a race languishing not indeed for lack of heroism, but for lack

[1] He has learnt much who knows grief.

[2] Land of France, thou art a most sweet country

of clear light overhead and of faith in itself and the fut
Beowulf, a victor, spoke as he left the earth words full of

Saxon and all English prose from Franco-Norman is there,
inaccurate Taine sees in old French poetry only the eleme
which degenerate to 'gossip and platitude.' It is made
for him, of dull stories, mere statements of fact which 'ne
wait for poetry and painting.' He even says of the poe
Roland that there is 'no splendour and no colour' in his st
It is a strange opinion for one who had read *Beowulf*
mediately before *Roland*, a poem compact of gloom before
woven of clarity. *Taine's estimate can only be explai*
by supposing that he was unconsciously under a Roma
influence which caused him to confuse poetry with sadness
murkiness, prose with clarity and lightness of heart.

first seems weak. Some time is needed before the charm softer, more modulated tones can be savoured. The su charged, ejaculatory rhetoric of Anglo-Saxon poetry gives a appearance of singular poverty to a language which is real new, in which words have as yet no past and figures an periphrases have still to be born.

From the time at which it is first known, Anglo-Saxon a traditional language with a style already inclining to de cadence. It possesses the accumulated wealth of a long life Its remoteness from the object or idea it expresses is seen i the very sumptuosity of the decoration. The literary orna ments are so many veils, which prevent contact with thing rarely denoted by their simple name. The French of th eleventh century, on the other hand, starts naked as it wa born, without heirlooms or the pomp of inherited rhetoric It may be said to have created its splendour out of nothing only by its own radiance. It is slight as a river at its source transparent as the water which gushes from a rock, but vita as that which has space and the future before it. It takes its words straight from the vulgar tongue, uses only the same terms as everyday prose. It has no solemn or strange periphrases with which to makes its effects. All it can do is exactly to choose the best of the common words, and to combine them in harmonious and varied groups. To move and captivate, it must have facts, the interest of a story; or else, for more lyrical compositions, the naked beauty of feeling and idea. It is by these signs that the infancy is recognized of a literature which may one day have great fortunes and make a tradition, but which has as yet no heritage to help or hamper it.

The same is true of the future poetic language of England. It made hay of all its former opulence. But after the long winter which ensued on the Norman Conquest, it had a season of renewal. It sprang again to life, bereft, stripped naked, prosaic, pedestrian, glued to facts, careful only for the accuracy after which it long tried vainly, yet with honest concentration on this modest aim. And when, at the advent of Chaucer, the language of English poetry had completed its initiation, the fine slightness and bareness of its framework were still distinctly perceptible beneath the poet's graceful images and his movement, his sprightliness, and his varied colours. Poetic language had begun again at the very beginning in order to make itself what it was, and what it still is.

(4) A merit of old French poetry from which the English

starts with the same gait and covers another stage. The assonance constitutes the uniformity in the lines of the *laisse*, so much alike that they are a distinct and coherent group, but the association is freer than that effected by rhyme, and each line retains an undefinable but sufficient individuality. Nothing could be more alert and ongoing than these disciplined masses which 'brush forward on their coursing steeds,' moved by one impulse, lit up, here and there, by the sonorous clarity of the syllables—'Halte-clère, Joyeuse'—as by the brandished swords of galloping horsemen.

The heroic age and the great *chansons de geste*, in which the *laisses*, the chained assonances, lend themselves to grandiose expression, as in the description of the fight between Roland and Oliver (*Gérard de Vienne*), or to metrical eloquence, as in Charlemagne's apostrophe of his barons (*Aimeri de Narbonne*), was succeeded by the age of romances, which was neither free from convention nor innocent of diffuseness and platitudes, but which made its own contribution of new graces. After the decasyllabic or alexandrine line came the line of eight syllables, and the distich superseded the *laisse* or stanza. Everything speaks of smaller ambitions, a feebler inspiration. It is a decline to the petty, to a prettiness, sometimes exquisite, which attains to a perfection of its own in many passages of Chrestien de Troyes's considerable works, in the short lays of Marie de France, and in the first half of the *Roman de la Rose*. But the same verse-form lent itself well to satire, to the fable and the fabliau, and with its serried rhymes was a good medium for Renart's ironies, for the highly flavoured stories of conjugal misadventure, and for Jean de Meung's encyclopaedic satire.

Always there were, not indeed below, but round about these different works, countless songs, romances, and *pastourelles*, at first and at their most beautiful in free verse and varied rhythms, but passing, gradually, to a formal lyricism, increasingly stereotyped in metre and sentiment. Although the surviving examples of these old romances are all too few, there are enough of them to show that they had the very qualities which have been denied or too grudgingly allowed to the old French poets. A strangeness, together with the vagueness of the refrains, refutes the charge of lack of mystery, excess of dry light, and exaggerated regularity. Sometimes there is the charm of delicious, fanciful unreason (*Volez vos que je vos chante ?*), or, in a few stanzas, an emotional drama of inexhaustible melancholy (*Gaiète et Orior*). More often,

in the *Reverdis*, the *jeu-partis*, the tensons, the rondels, the *ballettes*, there are rhythms light as a bird, so winged and so singing that as one reads them one hears a tune:

Por coi me bat mes maris,
Laisette![1]

Every verse-form, every arrangement of rhymes, and every stanza afterwards used in English poetry is to be found here in seed or in flower. Henceforth English, like French, poetry had a variety of forms proportionate to its variety of subjects.

It should be added that the change in the verse was not merely exterior. Its inner character was from this time modified. The principal accent came to fall where it fell in French, before the caesura and on the rhyme. The culminating points became the end of the line and the end of the hemistich. The line rose towards its rhyme, instead of falling, as formerly, from the initial alliterations. The pleasure of echoing and recalling sounds gave to vowels an importance in the line at least equal to that of consonants. Words, even Germanic words, were for long severely constrained in order [illegible]

[illegible] measure, and rhyme.

[illegible]

this literature was, as long as it lasted, known and loved by the Normans, and much of it was gradually translated or imitated by the English. Three centuries after the Conquest, the aesthetic character which we have noticed in this literature reappeared, almost in its entirety and with hardly any admixture, in Chaucer's English works. It behoves us now, however, exactly to determine the special contribution of the

[illegible]

starts with the same gait and covers another stage. Th assonance constitutes the uniformity in the lines of the *laiss* so much alike that they are a distinct and coherent group, bu the association is freer than that effected by rhyme, and eac line retains an undefinable but sufficient individuality. No thing could be more alert and ongoing than these discipline masses which 'brush forward on their coursing steeds,' move by one impulse, lit up, here and there, by the sonorous clarit of the syllables—'Halte-clère, Joyeuse'—as by the brandishe swords of galloping horsemen.

The heroic age and the great *chansons de geste*, in which th *laisses*, the chained assonances, lend themselves to grandios expression, as in the description of the fight between Rolan and Oliver (*Gérard de Vienne*), or to metrical eloquence, as i Charlemagne's apostrophe of his barons (*Aimeri de Narbonne* was succeeded by the age of romances, which was neither fre from convention nor innocent of diffuseness and platitudes, bu which made its own contribution of new graces. After th decasyllabic or alexandrine line came the line of eight syllable and the distich superseded the *laisse* or stanza. Everythin speaks of smaller ambitions, a feebler inspiration. It is decline to the petty, to a prettiness, sometimes exquisite, whic attains to a perfection of its own in many passages of Chrestie de Troyes's considerable works, in the short lays of Marie d France, and in the first half of the *Roman de la Rose*. But th same verse-form lent itself well to satire, to the fable and th fabliau, and with its serried rhymes was a good medium fo Renart's ironies, for the highly flavoured stories of conjug misadventure, and for Jean de Meung's encyclopaedic satir

Always there were, not indeed below, but round about thes different works, countless songs, romances, and *pastourelle* at first and at their most beautiful in free verse and varie rhythms, but passing, gradually, to a formal lyricism, in creasingly stereotyped in metre and sentiment. Althoug the surviving examples of these old romances are all too fev there are enough of them to show that they had the ver qualities which have been denied or too grudgingly allowe to the old French poets. A strangeness, together with th vagueness of the refrains, refutes the charge of lack of myster excess of dry light, and exaggerated regularity. Sometim there is the charm of delicious, fanciful unreason (*Volez vo que je vos chante?*), or, in a few stanzas, an emotional dram of inexhaustible melancholy (*Gaiète et Orior*). More ofte

in the *Reverdis*, the *jeu-partis*, the tensons, the rondels, the *ballettes*, there are rhythms light as a bird, so winged and so singing that as one reads them one hears a tune:

> Por coi me bat mes maris,
> Laisette![1]

Every verse-form, every arrangement of rhymes, and every stanza afterwards used in English poetry is to be found here in seed or in flower. Henceforth English, like French, poetry had a variety of forms proportionate to its variety of subjects.

It should be added that the change in the verse was not merely exterior. Its inner character was from this time modified. The principal accent came to fall where it fell in French, before the caesura and on the rhyme. The culminating points became the end of the line and the end of the hemistich. The line rose towards its rhyme, instead of falling, as formerly, from the initial alliterations. The pleasure of echoing and recalling sounds gave to vowels an importance in the line at least equal to that of consonants. Words, even Germanic words, were for long severely constrained in order

measure, and rhyme.

2. *Anglo-Norman Literature.*[2]—It was essential to recall the chief characteristics of French medieval literature, in general, without limitations of time or province, because the whole of this literature was, as long as it lasted, known and loved by the Normans, and much of it was gradually translated or imitated by the English. Three centuries after the Conquest

Normans to old French literature. To have confined ourselves to what they alone produced would have been manifest error, for the works which had most influence on early English poetry—the larger part of the chivalrous romances, the great allegories, the *Roman de Renart*, the fabliaux, the free and the formal lyrics—are of continental origin. Their particular contribution, and especially that of the Anglo-Normans, must, none the less, be distinguished and characterized, in order to understand the minds of the conquerors, that is, of the people whose literary tastes and needs were to make the most direct impression on the unified nation which sprang of their fusion with the vanquished.

The Norman element is, before the Conquest, difficult to unravel from the mass of French literature. What is certain is that the Normans had already severed every tie with the language and poetry of the Scandia whence they emanated. They may have kept the adventurous and warlike character of their Scandinavian ancestors, but marriages, the influence of their new surroundings, and their conversion to Christianity had gallicized them swiftly and fundamentally. From the eleventh century onwards, Normandy had a high repute for clerical science and piety, solid orthodoxy, and the beauty of her religious buildings, which are intermediate between the Romanesque and the Gothic. Rouen was a lettered, artistic, and religious capital city in which mystery-plays were already being performed. The Normans did more than any other people to propagate the cult of the Virgin, and to introduce the feast of the Immaculate Conception which was long forbidden by the Church. In spite of this, their ties with Rome were very close; their clergy were, on the whole, orthodox and rational. In the matter of poetry, they found the epic ready-made when they settled in France. 'They hardly seem,' says Gaston Paris, 'to have taken a personal part in the epic movement which was going on around them.' But they had a passion for this kind of poetry, for instance for the *Chanson de Roland*, which is not theirs but which they preserved, and whence some primitive fragment is said to have been sung by Taillefer before the army at Hastings. Their highest claim to be poets would be found in the *Vie de Saint Alexis* by Tedbald de Vernon, if the origin of this work were certain.

They landed on English soil, and for more than a century their language showed no essential difference from French.

The N[illegible]
tinen[illegible]
1204. [illegible] ...ts of the time lived at their court; many of the[illegible] were composed the[illegible] the zenith of this l[illegible]

Already, however, it is possible to see that the trouvères born in Great Britain, or called thither from the Continent, were under a special influence. Public taste dictated the matter and the form of their writings unless these had a political inspiration. They are nearly all chroniclers, by their subjects and their style. This is true of Gaimar with his *Lestoire des Engles*, Wace with his *Roman de Brut* (Brutus) and *Roman de Rou* (Rollo), Benoît de Sainte-More with his *Lestoire e la généalogie des dux qui unt esté par ordre en Normendie*, his *Roman de Troie*, and his romance of *Aeneas*, Eustace or Thomas de Kent with his *Alexander*, Garnier de Pont-Saint-Ma[illegible]

[illegible] general because he [illegible] ...ench poetry, would be better founded if he had limited their application to the Anglo-Normans. On the whole, Anglo-Norman verse does not deserve to be called very poetic. Almost all the verse certainly known to have been written by an Anglo-Norman poet, or a French poet at the Anglo-Norman court, has an indisputably prosaic character. It falls short in sensibility, in enthusiasm, in the search for beauty. It is made up, for the most part, of versified chronicles and didactic treatises. The Anglo-Normans were dominated either by intellectual curiosity or by utilitarianism. The epical and lyrical metres of their predecessors were almost exclusively succeeded by an octosyllabic line, which uses rhythm and rhyme only to aid memory, and since to the constraint of verse it adds none of its rightful pleasures, it often awakens regret for prose.

The conquest of England inspired the trouvères not with epics after the style of *Roland*, but with metrical chronicles. The battle of Hastings in the *Roman de Rou* has an almost equally surprising effect if it is read after the description of the fight at Maldon in which Byrhtnoth died, or after th[illegible] the battle of R[illegible]
T[illegible]
n[illegible] ...ery long story is copious and well-informed history and nothing more. It states the

It was not only the clerks who wrote Latin, nor did they confine its use to religious treatises. It was employed in this age in works of every kind, serious and frivolous, learned and popular, many of which greatly surpassed the writings in the English of the conquered or the French of the conquerors. William de Jumièges's *History of William I*, Ordericus Vitalis's *Ecclesiastical History*, William of Malmesbury's *Chronicle of the Kings of England*, and Henry of Huntingdon's *Annals*, are the principal monuments of the serious part of this literature in Latin,[1] and of the fantastic, mystifying works, the best known is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *History of the Britons*. The best examples of the works apparently more frivolous, but also more truly literature, are the letters and stories of Giraldus Cambrensis, the Latin jests and miscellaneous profanities of Walter Map, and Nigel Wireker's *Speculum Stultorum* or comic adventures of the ass Brunellus.

From what has been said, if follows that the study of literary monuments of the time should extend from French to Latin, if all and the highest intellectual activity of the inhabitants of Britain after the Norman invasion is to be understood. If the aesthetic elements which were to fashion renascent English literature are to be analysed, it is necessary to go further, to study not only the Latin of England, but also all the Latin, whatever its origin, of the religious offices which sounded week by week in the ears of the faithful, and had plainly an influence on the English verse-form in process of evolution.[2] When medieval Latin poets finally gave up attempting to reproduce the prosody of antiquity, when they wrote Latin verses with a purely accentual rhythm, and took advantage of the numerous similar endings of words in Latin to enrich their productions with sonorous rhymes, they provided the vernacular poets with models of versification. It was, in fact, they who first fully realized the resources of the new versification, and fully exploited its potentialities for the solemn and the comic. In no language was there for a long time anything to match the perfection of the hymns of the Church which were repeated throughout Christendom, Jacopone's *Stabat Mater* or Celano's *Dies Irae*. Nor was there anything to equal, for comic effect, the sonorous, single-

[1] Stephen Gaselee, *An Anthology of Medieval Latin* (prose and verse, 1925); *The Oxford Book of Medieval Latin Verse* (1937).

[2] G. Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody*, vol. i; idem, in *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i, Chap. XVIII.

rhymed quatrains of the Goliards, or unfrocked clerks, such as those attributed to Walter Map:

> *Meum est propositum in taberna mori:*
> *Vinum sit appositum morientis ori,*
> *Ut dicant, cum venerint, angelorum chori:*
> *'Deus sit propitius huic potatori.' . . .*

These Latin verses, which the faithful conned in church or drinkers trolled in the taverns, could exercise a considerable influence on English poetry from the time when the Anglo-Saxon line was finally abandoned, and new paths were explored for a metre which should be at once accentual and rhymed. The Anglo-Saxons had been able to translate much Latin quantitative verse without modifying their own prosody, for there was no common measure between the two verse-forms. But from this time Latin rhymed verse was allied with French verse to undermine and overthrow the Anglo-Saxon form. English poetry was to aim [illegible]
tion

B [illegible] mention
anot[illegible] which had important and lasting influence on it, and reached it first through the French and Latin of the conquerors. There is in Anglo-Norman literature, on the whole so practical and prosaic, one region in which sentiment and the marvellous are paramount. They exist, it is true, only in the subjects, and do not affect the even calm of the writers' tones. Yet they are there whenever a chronicler, pursuing his curious search for stories, has heard and wishes to repeat some Celtic legend.[1] It must continually have happened that the Normans became aware of the tales which had been traditional among the Britons around them since their glorious days and were the depository of their hope of revenge and also of [illegible]

[illegible] Wales to the Anglo-Normans
Was this Celtic in[illegible]

[illegible] extermination at the

[1] G. Saintsbury, *Flourishing of Romance and Rise of Allegory* (1897), E. Faral, *La Légende arthurienne des origines à Geoffrey de Monmouth* (1929)

hands of their Germanic conquerors, but teaches that as well as the Irish, untouched within their island, and the still independent Britons of the western and northern mountains, there were many survivors of this race in the centre and the south who were merged in the conquering people. We have seen that the conversion of the Angles to Christianity was the work of the Church of Ireland, and that Bede, though an out-and-out Romanist, emanated from a monastery founded by Celts and animated by their spirit. Anglo-Saxon hagiography is partly of Celtic inspiration, and there is a great resemblance between the life of the Irish saint Brandan and those of the Anglo-Saxon saints Cuthbert and Guthlac. Even the half-pagan poetry of the Anglo-Saxons is often much akin to what is nowadays called Celtic mystery and strangeness. The romance of *Beowulf* opens with a prologue on the mysterious origin of the hero which is singularly like the story in the British cycle of the apparition of Arthur. However, on the one hand, the defeat of the Church of Ireland by the Church of Rome, and, on the other, the exclusive, incurious character of the Anglo-Saxons, seem to have put very strict limits to their poetic debt to the Britons.

All this was changed at the coming of the Normans. For the first time, the proscribed Saxons felt themselves the brothers of the Welsh whom they had formerly despised and persecuted. The Normans, meanwhile, were the first to effect a fusion between these races, and they did it by violence. In the reign of Henry I they made a cruel and bloodthirsty conquest of Wales, hitherto independent. For two centuries this subjugation was nothing like final, but the contact, so early established by measures of force, made the Anglo-Normans curious about their adversaries. Hence works were written which at first were hardly literary in themselves, but which were important for the echo which they found in French, and even more in English, literature.

The first of these works in date, and the one most fruitful of consequences, was the Latin *History of the Britons* which Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote before 1147, and dedicated to the son of Henry I. The author had been brought up in a Benedictine monastery near Monmouth in Wales, of which place he was archdeacon when he wrote his book. He poses as a truthful chronicler, and claims to translate an old and unknown British book. He had, in fact, no precursors, save Gildas (sixth century), who does not mention Arthur, and

Nennius (tenth century), who says very little about him. Moreover, exploration of the Celtic literatures has yielded nothing except what is later than Geoffrey and imitated from him.

Thus Geoffrey is, in large part, the [illegible]
legend. [illegible]
is imposs
But it wa
out his fa

Following Nennius so far, he makes Brutus, the father of the Britons, into the great-grandson of Aeneas, who came to Britain and there founded Troynovant, or New Troy, afterwards called London.

But the most curious parts of his story are those which concern Arthur, represented as the heroic defender of the Britons, and Merlin, whose prophecies he collects. Arthur appears as the conqueror of the Anglo-Saxons, the Picts, and the Scots. He brings Ireland, Iceland, Scandinavia, and Gaul under his imperial rule, enters [illegible]
emperor, triumphs ove
Ever victorious, he liv

In spite of the prot
among others, Geoffre

[illegible]

[illegible] and giving birth to English patriotism.
Geoffrey Gaimar, a mediocre [illegible]

[illegible] the part of Chrestien de
Troyes, the conclusion is that the [illegible]

[illegible] Lancelot, as unworthy, by his sin,

hands of their Germanic conquerors, but teaches that as well as the Irish, untouched within their island, and the still independent Britons of the western and northern mountains, there were many survivors of this race in the centre and the south who were merged in the conquering people. We have seen that the conversion of the Angles to Christianity was the work of the Church of Ireland, and that Bede, though an out-and-out Romanist, emanated from a monastery founded by Celts and animated by their spirit. Anglo-Saxon hagiography is partly of Celtic inspiration, and there is a great resemblance between the life of the Irish saint Brandan and those of the Anglo-Saxon saints Cuthbert and Guthlac. Even the half-pagan poetry of the Anglo-Saxons is often much akin to what is nowadays called Celtic mystery and strangeness. The romance of *Beowulf* opens with a prologue on the mysterious origin of the hero which is singularly like the story in the British cycle of the apparition of Arthur. However, on the one hand, the defeat of the Church of Ireland by the Church of Rome, and, on the other, the exclusive, incurious character of the Anglo-Saxons, seem to have put very strict limits to their poetic debt to the Britons.

All this was changed at the coming of the Normans. For the first time, the proscribed Saxons felt themselves the brothers of the Welsh whom they had formerly despised and persecuted. The Normans, meanwhile, were the first to effect a fusion between these races, and they did it by violence. In the reign of Henry I they made a cruel and bloodthirsty conquest of Wales, hitherto independent. For two centuries this subjugation was nothing like final, but the contact, so early established by measures of force, made the Anglo-Normans curious about their adversaries. Hence works were written which at first were hardly literary in themselves, but which were important for the echo which they found in French, and even more in English, literature.

The first of these works in date, and the one most fruitful of consequences, was the Latin *History of the Britons* which Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote before 1147, and dedicated to the son of Henry I. The author had been brought up in a Benedictine monastery near Monmouth in Wales, of which place he was archdeacon when he wrote his book. He poses as a truthful chronicler, and claims to translate an old and unknown British book. He had, in fact, no precursors, save Gildas (sixth century), who does not mention Arthur, and

Nennius (tenth century), who says very little about him. Moreover, exploration of the Celtic literatures has yielded nothing except what is later than Geoffrey and imitated from him.

Thus Geoffrey is, in large part, the creator of the Arthurian legend. His book is a work of imagination in disguise, and it is impossible to say to what extent tradition helped him. But it was certainly with an historian's gravity that he wrote out his fables.

Following Nennius so far, he makes Brutus, the father of the Britons, into the great-grandson of Aeneas, who came to Britain and there founded Troynovant, or New Troy, afterwards called London.

But the most curious parts of his story are those which concern Arthur, represented as the heroic defender of the Britons, and Merlin, whose prophecies he collects. Arthur appears as the conqueror of the Anglo-Saxons, the Picts, and the Scots. He brings Ireland, Iceland, Scandinavia, and Gaul under his imperial rule, enters into conflict with the Roman

Saxons. Both peoples were presently enthusiastic for the

principally by the Anglo-Normans, and that Walter Map, who was half-Norman and half-Welsh, presumably welded together the Arthurian legend and the legend of the Holy Grail. He is credited with giving the cycle its religious and moral character, in that he represented Guinevere, Arthur's wife, as an adulteress, and her lover, Lancelot, as unworthy, by his sin,

to accomplish the quest of the Holy Grail, which was reserved for his son, Galahad. The *Queste del Saint Graal*, *Lancelot du Lac*, and *Mort d'Arthur* are attributed to Walter Map.

The powerful imaginative leaven of this story, the most beautiful and varied of all those in the minds of the English when they again began to write, must not be forgotten. It was a story all the more stimulating to them because it was set in their own country, and they believed it to be national.

3. *English Literature from 1066 to 1350.*[1] *Changes in the Language.*—Small though the aesthetic value of Anglo-Norman literature may be, it is great in comparison with that of the contemporary literature in English, labouring, as this did, under the disadvantages of a despised language, loss of tradition, and lack of culture. It was a literature written by half-literate men for an ignorant people. The three centuries after the Norman Conquest produced writings which show the gradual transformations undergone by the old language, and are therefore full of interest for the philologist, but which offer hardly anything to the amateur of literature. He may be touched by the very awkwardness of these attempts at literary composition, but he esteems them merely as rude translations, inharmonious verses which hesitate between alliterative rhythm and the cadence of the rhymed line, and alternately obey and ignore the laws of syllabism. All this licence would have horrified the scops and it gave the trouvères good matter for ridicule.

The reconstruction was slow, but the ruin of Anglo-Saxon rhetoric was prompt, almost, indeed, instantaneous. It had two principal causes, the repeated efforts of English writers to translate the works of French poets, often to translate them literally, and the wide and deep changes swiftly wrought in the speech of the vanquished people by their lack of culture and by the contaminating influence of the language of the conquerors.

Several modifying processes affected Anglo-Saxon.[2] The vocabulary suffered the rapid and final loss of a considerable number of words, of nearly all those proper to the old poetic

[1] Jusserand, op. cit., Book II, Chap. IV; Schofield, op. cit.; J. E. Wells, *Manual of the Writings in Middle English* (New Haven, 1916); J. Hall, *Selections from Early Middle English* (Oxford, 1920); K. Sisam, *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose* (Oxford, 1921).

[2] H. Bradley, in *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. i, Chap. III; idem, *The Making of English* (1904); O. Jespersen, *Growth and Structure of the English Language* (1906); H. C. Wyld, *The Historical Study of the Mother Tongue* (1906); R. Huchon, *Histoire de la langue anglaise*, vol. ii (1931).

their religious sentiment, these were changes which affected all Europe, and sprang not from conditions in England, but from the widespread fluctuations of piety in the Middle Ages. The asceticism of cloisters, the growing tenderness which mingled with the devotion to the Virgin Mary, and the exaltation which was imbued with chivalry and mysticism, were reflected, in turn, in these English works.

Whenever they are specifically English, they owe it to the very popular character of their public. The problem was to gain the ear of an oppressed, poor, and ignorant people; and more than elsewhere it was therefore necessary to use a very simple language and to multiply explanations and concrete details. Sometimes, also, the choice of the subject and the mood of the story were determined by a gentle pity for the miserable state of the faithful. Again and again, an author excuses himself for using a language so much despised as English, saying that he has wished to write for men who know no French and have no edifying books. He knows that his style is bad, that his rhymes are weak, but he believes himself justified by his aim. It is chiefly the progress in form which to-day has interest for those who go through this starved period of English literature.

The earliest in date of these religious writings, the *Poema Morale*[1] which in its original form goes back to about 1170, is a grave exhortation to Christians to turn aside from the paths of this world and to enter those of devoutness and salvation. The preacher begins with self-accusation—he has reached old age without giving enough of his thoughts to God. He begs men to remember the day of judgment, to keep the thought of hell and paradise ever before them. Let them leave the broad road which leads to hell and take the strait path to heaven.

The feeling animating the poem is sincere and sometimes ardent, but severe and sad. While the conception of paradise is mainly spiritual, hell is depicted with all its arsenal of material terrors. Souls are tortured by fire and cold in turn: burning, they think that to freeze is felicity; freezing, they sigh for the flames. Although the Old and New Law are said in one passage to be comprised in love for one's neighbour, charity is not preached except as the means of salvation. The asceticism of the cloister is predominant, and the individu-

[1] Text in Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, vol. I. English translation by Gasquet (1905).

a'ism of the Christian who must esteem himself above his kin: 'Nor let wife hope in husband, nor husband in wife. Let each man live for himself throughout his days.'

The novelty of this poem is not doctrinal but formal. In style and versification, these four hundred lines of seven accents, in sections of four and three, are an innovation, and the form had a high destiny, for it was adopted by most of the popular ballads. Since the rhythm is iambic, the line is, at the same time, roughly syllabic. Almost every one of these lines, which are rhymed in couplets, contains a maxim, sometimes well turned and in the nature of an antithesis, so that it is easy to remember. The sententious style contrasts with the epical manner of the Anglo-Saxons. The old phraseology has gone, and has been replaced by a simple language, without images and bare and precise, but animated by some homely comparisons, at once exact and prosaic:

> Each man with what he hath may buy him heaven,
> Both he that hath more and he that hath less,
> This one with his penny, the other with his pound,
> 'Tis the most wondrous bargain that any man found.

We feel ourselves not far removed from the couplets of a Defoe, blunt and practical, in which there is the same lack of poetry and the same skill in speaking straight to simple people.

form of his work is entirely new, and remained an isolated phenomenon of literature. The seven-accented line with a fixed caesura (4 + 3) is used as in the *Poema Morale*, but is unrhymed, is made on the pattern of the quantitative Church verses, ends with a redundant feminine syllable, and is completely regular as regards the place of its accents and the number of its syllables. It is like a first essay in blank verse. Regularity is its only merit. The author is afflicted with

[1] Holt edition (Oxford, 1878) Extracts in Morris and Skeat, op. cit., vol. I.

energy on form, Orm marks the beginnings of the desire to subject the universal indiscipline of the language to rules.

There is more poetry in some of the contemporary prayers. The *Prayer to Our Lady* has warmth and emphasis, although its rhythm is uncertain; and in a few effusions of the early thirteenth century there is the tender mysticism of a Hugh of Saint-Victor, for instance in the *Luve Ron* of Thomas of Hales, which contains the first truly artistic and poetic stanzas in the new language. It is with Villon's accent and in verses as rhythmical as his, that the poet speaks of the transitory nature of earthly joys, and with an emotion already romantic that he enumerates the illustrious heroes and ladies of the past:

Hwer is Paris and Heleyne,
That weren so bryht and feyre on bleo,
Amadas, Tristram and Dideyne,
Yseude and alle theo,
Ector with his scharpe meyne,
And Cesar riche of worldes feo?
Heo beoth iglyden ut of the reyne,
So the schaft is of the cleo.[2]

The *Ancren Rewle*,[3] the best specimen of the prose of this time, is equally suave. It consists of rules for the ascetic life given by a prelate to three anchorites, women who have decided to live not in a convent, but in a solitary dwelling near a church. There is new sweetness in these artless and minute instructions. The atmosphere is that of a period in which devotion to the Virgin is supreme, and the consciousness of feminine nature has entered even asceticism. This Rule also exists in Latin and in French, but the English does not seem to be a translation.

The pious writings of the early fourteenth century are more alert in style, and can be vivacious, gay, and charming. The *Life of Saint Brandan*,[4] a translation from the French, introduced

[1] F. Furnivall, *Early English Poems and the Lives of the Saints* (1862).

[2] Where is Paris and Helen,
That were so bright and fair of face,
Amadis, Tristram and Dido,
Isoud and all they,
Hector with his sharp strength,
And Caesar rich of world's wealth?
They are gone out of the realm,
As the shaft is off the cliff.

[3] Ed. by S. Morton (Camden Society, 1853). Modern English translati
In Medieval Library, vol. xviii (1926).

[4] *The Early South English Legendary or Lives of the Saints*, ed. C. Horstmar
(Early English Text Society, vol. lxxxvii).

the English to the enchantments and marvels and the optimism of the beautiful Celtic legend. The *Life of Saint Dunstan*, which is attributed to Robert of Gloucester, is full of homely touches and cordial light-heartedness. These rude and artless verses have a comic liveliness which compensates for their unrelieved prosaic character, for instance, in the scene in which the saint, busy at his little forge, receives a visit from the devil in the guise of a pretty woman who smilingly talks nonsense to him. The saint is not taken in, but puts his pincers in the fire while she is speaking; then suddenly, when they are red-hot, pinches the devil by the nose, so that he flees, writhing and howling:

> As well for the Devil to have been at home, and wiped his nose,
> He never hied him thither more, to heal his cold.

At about the same time, in 1303, a Gilbertine monk, Robert Mannyng of Brunne, in Lincoln, undertook to translate, under the title of *Handlyng Sinne*,[1] the *Manuel des Péchés*, which one of his fellow-countrymen of the previous century, William of Wadington, had written in the French of England, the debased language for which he excused himself by pleading his birth:

> De le françois ni del rimer
> Ne me doit nul homme blâmer,
> Car en Angleterre fus né
> Et nourri, ordiné et élevé.[2]

Wadington, in forty-four stories, had shown the paths of sin. Mannyng by turns follows, neglects, and adds to this model, showing more independence than was customary

attacks on the landlords, anticipating *Piers Plowman*, and does

[1] Edited by Furnivall (Roxburghe Club Publications, 1862, and Early English Text Society, vol. cxix).

[2] For my French and my rhymes
No man should blame me,
For I was born in England,
And there bred and brought up.

not spare the clergy, whom he blames for laxity, luxury, and frivolity. A true monk, he has little indulgence for women, and makes them responsible for the sins of men.

But his real merit is that he can tell a story well, clearly, with go, and with a certain agility hitherto unknown in England. To invent was not his part. When he does not copy Wadington, who himself had said of his book: 'Rien del mien ni metrai,' he draws on the common treasure. His stories are always interesting, in spite of their childishness and strange moral standpoint. They are very like the stories peddled by the Franciscan friars, to stimulate the curiosity as much as the devoutness and charity of the people.

The demand for pious stories was abundantly supplied by a collection of twenty-four thousand lines of verse, the *Cursor Mundi*,[1] which dates from about 1320. It is an embellished version of the New Testament, in the Northumbrian dialect, and an octosyllabic metre more regular than Mannyng's. Its aim is to interest the people in the Bible stories, thus providing a counter-attraction to the romances. 'Most books are written for the French,' says the author, and declares that he speaks to Englishmen. His poem may be described as the matter of the dramatic mysteries in narrative form. The Bible is not its only source, for its unknown author has recourse also to the *Historia Scolastica* of Peter Comestor, and does not hesitate to draw on many other French and Latin writers of the previous age. His copious verses are often picturesque, and are full of humanity, and that they enjoyed a great popularity is proved by the number of manuscript copies in which they have reached us.

A work of more local significance is that of the hermit Richard Rolle of Hampole.[2] For one thing, this writer is the only one of his time whose life is known to us in some detail. His reputation for sanctity was well established when he died, for the Cistercian sisters, whose convent was near his hermitage, expected his canonization so confidently that they had an office written in his honour, together with his life in Latin.

He was born in Yorkshire about 1290, studied theology at Oxford, and at the age of nineteen fled, in fear of temptation,

[1] Ed. R. Morris (Early English Text Society, lvii, lix, lxii, lxvi, lxvii, xcix, ci).
[2] *English Writings of Richard Rolle*, ed. H. E. Allen (Oxford, 1931); *Selected Works*, translated by G. C. Heseltine (1930). See *Writings ascribed to Richard Rolle*, by H. E. Allen, who deprives him of the authorship of *The Pricke of Conscience* (ed. R. Morris, Philological Society, 1863).

not spare the clergy, whom he blames for laxity, luxur
frivolity. A true monk, he has little indulgence for v
and makes them responsible for the sins of men.

But his real merit is that he can tell a story well,
with go, and with a certain agility hitherto unknown i
land. To invent was not his part. When he does no
Wadington, who himself had said of his book: 'Rien de
ni metrai,' he draws on the common treasure. His stor
always interesting, in spite of their childishness and s
moral standpoint. They are very like the stories pedd
the Franciscan friars, to stimulate the curiosity as much
devoutness and charity of the people.

The demand for pious stories was abundantly supplie
collection of twenty-four thousand lines of verse, the
Mundi,[1] which dates from about 1320. It is an embe
version of the New Testament, in the Northumbrian
and an octosyllabic metre more regular than Mannyng'
aim is to interest the people in the Bible stories, thus pro
a counter-attraction to the romances. 'Most books are
for the French,' says the author, and declares that he
to Englishmen. His poem may be described as the
of the dramatic mysteries in narrative form. The B
not its only source, for its unknown author has recour
to the *Historia Scolastica* of Peter Comestor, and do
hesitate to draw on many other French and Latin wri
the previous age. His copious verses are often pictu
and are full of humanity, and that they enjoyed a great
larity is proved by the number of manuscript copies in
they have reached us.

A work of more local significance is that of the
Richard Rolle of Hampole.[2] For one thing, this wi
the only one of his time whose life is known to us i
detail. His reputation for sanctity was well establishe
he died, for the Cistercian sisters, whose convent was n
hermitage, expected his canonization so confidently th
had an office written in his honour, together with
in Latin.

He was born in Yorkshire about 1290, studied theol
Oxford, and at the age of nineteen fled, in fear of temp

[1] Ed. R. Morris (Early English Text Society, lvii, lix, lxii, lxvi, lxvii,

[2] *English Writings of Richard Rolle*, ed. H. E. Allen (Oxford, 1931);
Works, translated by G. C. Heseltine (1930). See *Writings ascribed to*
Rolle, by H. E. Allen, who deprives him of the authorship of *The*
Conscience (ed. R. Morris, Philological Society, 1863).

first from the university and then from his family, who thought him mad. He became a hermit. The fame of his sanctity spread through the neighbourhood and men came to visit him, but even while he was answering questions, he went on writing his meditations, and 'what he said differed from what he wrote.' He is the most diligent religious writer of his time. Such was his absorption in contemplation, that his friends could divest him of worn clothes, mend them, and put them on him again without attracting his notice. Enthusiastic and visionary, mystical and fervent, he is a connecting link between the orthodox saints, of whom he is the last, and the Protestant visionaries—Fox, Bunyan, Wesley, and their like—whom he resembles in certain particularities of his life. He is tempted by the devil in the semblance of a girl he had once loved. He is haunted by fear of death and hell. He has moments of tenderness so exalted that his prose halts, for instance in his *Nominis Jesu Encomion*:

> Therefore Jhesu es thy name. A! A! that wondyrful name! A! that delittabyll name! This es the name that is abowne all names. . . . I gede abowte be covaytyse of reches and I fande noghte Jhesu. I rane be the wantonnes of flesche and I fand noghte Jhesu. I satt in companyes of worldly myrthe and I fand noghte Jhesu. . . . Therefore I turnede by anothir waye, and I rane abowte be poverte, and I fande Jhesu, pure borne in the worlde, laid in a crybe and lappid in clathis.

Unfortunately his verse does not fulfil the promise of fervour which this mood contains. It is wordy and mediocre, never without the taint of the scholastic and the puerile. Although a layman, never in orders, whose conduct and enthusiasm were ruled by intimate inspirations, Richard Rolle nevertheless represents the most rigid orthodoxy of his time. About 1340, when Wyclif was already sixteen years old and about to drive a breach in the system of strict Roman discipline, he extolled it in his *Pricke of Conscience*, if the poem can still be attributed to him, which recent research renders doubtful. He became its defender a generation before the clergy were indignantly denounced by Langland for their abuses and stung by Chaucer's wit.

Rolle's aim is to give an impulse to devoutness, by first *showing forth the miseries and vicissitudes of this world, and* then depicting the after-life, of which his presentment is as concrete and grossly material as was usual among the preachers of the day. Diseases are among the pains of Rolle's purgatory —dropsy, gout, ulcers, boils, paralysis, quinsy, leprosy—

and so is a fire of which the heat is graduated according to the gravity of sins. Great sins burn like wood, small sins like straw, those of middling import like hay. He emphasises the value of prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and Masses as means of relieving the souls in purgatory. At this moment of history, it is curious to come upon his unhesitating declaration of the efficacy of pardons bought from the pope or the bishops, who hold the keys of this treasure of the Church, purchased for her by her doctors, saints, and martyrs. The pains of Holle's hell are heat, cold, dirt, evil smells, hunger, and thirst—the damned drink fire and suck vipers' heads to quench their thirst—and also darkness, the sight of devils, vermin, the blows of red-hot hammers wielded by demons, tears of fire, shame, red-hot chains, and despair.

No idle tale overtaxes this author's credulity. One could wish, for his own sake, that many of his grave explanations had been written in jest. There is, for instance, his prescription for discovering the sex of a child in the act of birth: if its first cry be *A* it is a boy, if *E* a girl; for was not Adam's initial *A* and Eve's *E*?

The good hermit was a little too credulous, behind even his own generation. He awakes a longing for the rough good sense of Langland and Chaucer's merry scepticism. And he makes us sigh also for Chaucer's art, as we read the ten thousand octosyllabic lines which versify his visions and display the childishness of his matter, unrelieved by any merit of form. These are poor verses. He himself confesses that he had no regard for the beautiful:

> For I rek noght, thogh the ryme be rude,
> If the maters thar-of be gude.

He marks the decline of religious poetry in the first half of the fourteenth century.

5. *Secular Poetry from 1200 to 1350.*—A little later than religious poetry, yet side by side with it and growing rapidly from age to age, a secular literature developed which was founded exclusively on French works. It was, as was natural, predominantly chivalrous, and was inspired by French romantic poems. It has, therefore, very little originality of matter, but it betrays national instincts in a preference for subjects and heroes connected with the land of Britain. Large parts of every one of the romantic cycles of chivalry were turned into English in order that minstrels might tell them to the

people, but from the beginning the British stories were most valued, and gave the native poets matter for their most popular, and here and there also for their most original songs.

In the last quarter [illegible]
thirteenth [illegible]

[illegible] almost to the point of being dubbed traitor. Freeman, the historian of the Norman Conquest, cannot enough despise this Anglo-Saxon who betrays his race, whose national heroes are not Alfred and Hengist, but Brutus, the descendant of Aeneas, and the famous King Arthur. None the less, Layamon's patriotism is as ardent as it is mistaken. His error [illegible]
the fact that the t[illegible]
inextricably fused. [illegible]
already the English nation, and had England for its place and symbol. It is because he sees the Britons as legitimate owners of England that Layamon makes common cause with them against the Saxons, whom he regards as invaders, and there is not a doubt that when he speaks of the Saxons he is secretly thinking of the Normans, the oppressors of his fellow-countrymen.

Layamon is, on the whole, a faithful translator. He contributes nothing new except certain passages of the Arthurian legend. These principally reflect the developments of this legend in the half-century which separated him from Wace, yet he deserves honour for first revealing some of the most poetic touches in the story. Living, as he did, on the Welsh March, he may have had direct access to traditions of which his forerunners were unaware. Most of his additions are, however, accepted nowadays as either based on a text of Wace

[1] *Layamon's Brut*, ed. with translation by F. Madden, 3 vols (1847). Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. i.

other than that printed, or borrowed from the lost C.
rimée of Geoffrey Gaimar.

Nevertheless, Layamon is no mere translator. He
be classed among the trouvères, with their curiosity
simple amusement they found in their own fine tales
a scop, and has kept something of the epic mood and t
impassioned note of Anglo-Saxon poetry, together w
of its vocabulary, a rhythm which still hesitates
rhyme and alliteration, and certain traces of the
mythology and the sombre, ancestral enthusiasm
He is, moreover, the first writer to weave about King
a fairy lore of which there is hardly a word in Geo
Monmouth or in Wace. He is more at his ease than
the realm of the marvellous. When he tells the stor
passing of the king we seem to be listening to Malory:

When these words were spoken,
There came thither wending,
A little boat moving,
On the waters it floated,
And two women in it,
Wondrously formed;
And lo! they took Arthur,
And swiftly they bare him,
And softly him down laid,
And forth 'gan their sailing.
Then was it accomplished
What Merlin said whilom,
That great woe would follow
On Arthur's forthfaring.
Still think the Britons
That Arthur yet liveth
And dwelleth in Avalon
With the fairest of all elves;
Still wait the Britons
For Arthur's returning.

Very far from attaining to Wace's easy fluency, co
and courtliness, Layamon, awkward and blunt, y
plebeian way which is not unpleasing. He recu
massive ironies of the Anglo-Saxon epic. Thus he
the British king Uther, with Arthur's help, defe
brother Pascent, who together with Gillomar, the sav
invader, attempted to dethrone him. At the mome
Uther has wounded Gillomar to death and Arthur
Pascent the poet's voice has the very tones of th
Brunanburh:

On the head he smote him
So that he down fell,

In his mouth his sword thrust—
Uncouth his dinner—
So went the sword's point
In the earth beneath him.
And then spake Uther,
'Pascent, now lie there,
Now hast thou Britain,
To thy hand hast won it.
So is now hap to thee;
Therein death hath come to thee;
Dwell shalt thou therein
With thy fellow Gillomar,
And well enjoy Britain.
To you I deliver it;
Ye twain may presently
Dwell in the land with us;
Nor dread ye ever
Who food will give ye.'

Such passages, occurring in a chivalrous romance, show the transitional character of Layamon's curious version of the Arthurian story. He was at once the last of the scops and the first of the English trouvères.

The works which came after his were principally rhymed chronicles, translations which include nearly all the cycles and are interesting mainly when they have a national character. Popular sympathy was to gather later about Robin Hood, the outlaw and unmatched bowman, a Saxon, proscribed by the Normans, who lived in Sherwood Forest with Maid Marian, his love. Meanwhile the English people were beguiled by the [illegible]

These romances were hardly more than copies of French or Latin books. There is more originality of plot, manner, and spirit in the romances of *Havelok* and *Horn*, which were in- [illegible] Both had already been told [illegible] the versions of [illegible] lent, attractive, and in some ways superior. They have a distinct manner due to a different public. For there was something rough and popular about the audiences of the English minstrels.

[1] W. W. Skeat, *Havelok*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1915); F. Holthausen, *Havelok*, 3rd ed. (Heidelberg, 1928); J. Hall, *King Horn* (Oxford, 1901); Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. i. Translations by L. A. Hibbard, *Three Middle English Romances* (1911). See Hibbard, *Mediæval Romance in England* (Oxford, 1924).

They would have wearied of long traditional descriptions of magnificent ceremonies and sumptuous halls, of unending analysis of courtly love. They wanted a quicker moving story, a franker sentiment, and homelier realism in descriptions.

These two romances appeared in their English form towards the end of the thirteenth century. French chivalrous poetry was beginning to exhaust itself with repetition, and to give place to prose as a medium for reaching a public which had almost ceased to seek anything in literature except the element of the curious in adventures. But the romances had only just reached the people of England, whose minds were less cultivated, simpler, and more susceptible to the charm of rudimentary poetry.

After his *Lestorie des Engles* Gaimar had written the *Lai de Haveloc*, the title being a corruption of the name of the Dane Anlaf Cuaran, who fought at Brunanburh. The English poet, while seemingly unaware of Gaimar, yet does not derive immediately from the original legend, for the usual outline of the French romances has plainly influenced his style. Its beginning recalls the popular story which was to be crystallized in the famous ballad of the *Babes in the Wood*.

Goldburh, daughter of Athelwold, the good king of England, is left an orphan and the ward of her uncle Godrich, Earl of Cornwall, who has promised to marry her to the best man in the kingdom, but who really is envious of her throne and thinks of ridding himself of her. As for Havelok, son of the Danish king Birkabeyn, he is in the power of the wretch Godard, his guardian, who delivers him to the poor fisherman Grim to be put to death. Grim spares the boy, who reaches England, where he is long a wanderer but is at last hired as scullion by Princess Goldburh's cook. Thus humbly placed, he amazes the countryside by his strength and his exploits, and Goldburh's uncle ironically marries her to him, as the best man he knows. But Goldburh recognizes the youth's royal birth by the light which issues from his mouth and by a sign, the red cross he bears on his shoulder. With the help of a vassal who has remained faithful, Havelok reconquers Denmark, then wrests England from Godrich. Godard is dragged over stony soil by an old mare and then hanged, and Godrich is burnt alive. Thus all ends for the best.

Love plays an insignificant part in this romance in which adventure dominates. But the simple and artless narrative throws the element of the pathetic into full relief. In the

beginning when God ...

... in the dungeon in which he has ...
of cold and hunger. ...
heart fails him so th ...
miserable hut of the fisherman Grim, his dialogue with his
wife Dame Leve ...
sees that the boy
and self-interest
the child whom he had sworn to kill—these scenes and others are so vigorously realistic as to appeal to every class of reader, and interest the simplest of them.

Havelok is a narrativ...
mately correct. *Horn,* ...

... dominant in ... being transi... the romances of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and the romantic ballads of the later period.

According to the trouvère Thomas, who wrote *Horn et Rimenhild* in the twelfth century, Horn was the son of Havelok and Goldburh, the hero and heroine of the preceding romance. The two stories have in common their Scandinavian origin, but the later of them has much the larger share of the marvellous and the exotic.

There is a great difference between Thomas's version, with its five thousand alexandrine lines and long single-rhymed stanzas, and the lively English poem, which has fifteen hundred brief lines of two accents, so that it is about seven times shorter than the other. Its adventures are hardly less numerous, but the descriptions introduced on the slightest pretext have disappeared. Thomas never loses an opportunity to describe, whether holidays, feasts, ceremonies, fights, persons, or clothes, and he fully analyses sentimental feelings. But his pictures and his analyses are alike conventional in type, and it is only because of the courtliness and refinement which he shares with all his school that the English poem awakens any regret for their tedium. There is much more go and energy in the English *Horn*. When we hear it, we do not feel that we are listening to a trouvère with his poetical recipes and his ready-made developments of a situation. In

spite of its improbabilities, the balder story comes nearer to the frank, manly tone of the epic.

Horn, the son of the king of Suddene, is a child when his father is slain by the Saracens, who land on the coast and waste the country. But Horn is so handsome that the Saracens cannot make up their minds to kill him, and with twelve other noble boys they put him on board a ship without sails or oars. The current bears these children, safe and sound, to the land of Ailmar, king of Westernesse. Under this king's care Horn is well treated and taught, and wins love from every one, but especially from Rymenhilde, the king's daughter, who gives herself to him. When their love is discovered, Horn is banished from the kingdom by Ailmar. He asks the girl to wait seven years for him, after which time she may, if he has not returned to her, marry another. She gives him a ring which is to remind him of his love and endow him with strength to withstand every trial. The seven years are filled with adventures and prowess. At their expiry, Ailmar compels his daughter to accept the hand of Madi, king of Reynes. Horn, whom she warns, hastens to the palace and reaches it on the wedding-day. He enters, disguised as a pilgrim, and his face smeared with black, so that he is not recognized, but is taken by every one for a beggar. The bride is beside herself with grief and disfigured by tears, but she goes through the rites of a wedding-day. The scene of her recognition of her lover gives an idea of the swiftness and simple pathos of this poem. When she omits to pour out wine or ale for the supposed pilgrim, he asks her for a drink, because 'beggars are thirsty,' and while she is serving him he alludes obscurely to the past, turning her heart to ice since she fancies him a messenger sent to announce her lover's death to her. For some time he encourages her in this mistake, even giving her, as a last memorial of him she had loved, the gold ring which had been her own present. Thereupon she exclaims:

'Heart, now thou burst,
For Horn hast thou no more
That thee hath pained so sore.'
She fell on her bed,
There her knife is hid,
To slay therewith her loathed king
And herself, both,
On that same night,
If Horn come not might.

To heart knife she set,
But Horn anon her let,
His shirt-lap he can take,
And wiped away that black,
That was on his neck,
And said, 'Queen, so dear,
I am Horn, thine own.
Nor canst thou me not know.
I am Horn of Westernesse,
In arms thou me kiss.'

There are no subtle analyses in *Horn*, but it has what is ...tter, the undisguised voice of passion.

Havelok, and even more *Horn*, show how much borrow... g fr... time, and ...ow... ...ven when ...bo... ...ation and ...dependence in the other poetic forms acclimatized in the ...me period. As early as the middle of the thirteenth century, ... curious poem was written in eighteen hundred octosyllabic ...nes, *The Owl and the Nightingale*.[1] It is one of the *disputoisons* ... tensons, held in so much honour by the poets of Provence ...d France, an allegorical debate between an owl and a ...ightingale who discuss the rival merits of their song. Finally ...ey decide to submit the dispute to 'Maister Nichole of ...uldeforde. . . . He wuneth at Porteshom, at one tune in ...orsete. . . .'. The solution is proposed by the nightingale ...d accepted by the owl, who knows that if, in his youth,

...nguage not yet supple, and it is weighted by many tedious ...assages and repetitions. But the style is lucid, there are ...vely touches, and an attempt is made to use rhyme for ...nphasizing points and outline.

[1] Ed. J. W. H. Atkins (with translation, Cambridge, 1922); J. E. Wells ...lelles Lettres Series, Boston, revised ed., 1909).

iere. Here, indeed, only language shows that poet and are not French.

iave the same impression when we read the few extant f the period. Some, dating from the reign of Edward I :307),[2] far surpass in lyrical charm the verses we have ed, and their inspiration and form are entirely French. iave the French way of evoking pictures of spring and ng gardens, and these clichés take the place of the , northern suggestions of the Anglo-Saxons. But the novelty of the language can lend to this poetry a y and pathos which are absent from the outworn and tional French verses of the same age. Thus, in the l song *Alison*, a refrain on the French model supports a of mixed three- and four-accented lines, which has y arranged rhymes, some of them repeated as often as ies:

> An hendy[3] hap ichabbe y-hent,[4]
> Ichot[5] from hevene it is me sent,
> From alle wymmen my love is lent,[6]
> And lyht[7] on Alisoun.

ie song *Springtime* the misery of passion is portrayed.

onder proud, so well it will them seem' But for lack only love he desires, he 'this joy-weal will forgo, and in od be banished.'

where freer and more native rhythms give out a yet pontaneous note:

s icumen in.	Summer is come in.
ing cuccu.	Loudly sing cuckoo,
i sed and bloweth med,	Groweth seed and bloweth mead,
ingth the wde nu.	And springeth the wood new.
cu.	Sing cuckoo.

Translation

Augustu.

Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu.
Bulluc sterteth, bucke verteth,
Murie sing cuccu.
Cuccu, cuccu.
Wel singes thu, cuccu,
Ne swike thu naver nu.

Ewe bleateth after lamb,
Loweth after calf the cow.
Bullock starteth, buck verteth,
Merry sing cuckoo.
Cuckoo, cuckoo.
Well singest thou, cuckoo,
Nor cease thou ever now.

We quote also the simple refrain of a poem of courtly love which has otherwise nothing of the popular:

Blow, northern wind,
Send thou me my sweeting,
Blow, northern wind, blow, blow, blow!

Folk-songs of this type reappear only at the end of the sixteenth century, for they were long overlaid by a more formalist poetry. But at this time the numerous and exact descriptive touches bear witness to a more marked feeling for nature than is perceptible in most of the contemporary French songs.

But it is perhaps in the political songs,[1] made from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, that the native genius shows itself most unmistakably. Elsewhere imitation is the rule and themes are borrowed wholesale from foreign sources. But the political songs are inspired by events within the country; they express aspirations, anger, loves, and hates which are specially English. At first, it is true, they were written in Latin or French: they originated with the clerks and were meant for the ruling class. But very soon the minstrels began to compose them for the people, and therefore in English. It is noteworthy that the earliest of these satires appeared during the Barons' War, when the nobles ranged themselves about Simon de Montfort to give royalty check. The whole English people were moved by this great quarrel, and the support of the popular or Anglo-Saxon element was indispensable to the audacious campaign of the rebel peers. In 1264 a song on the battle of Lewes ridiculed Richard of Cornwall, the brother of King Henry III:

Richard that thou be ever trichard,
Trichen shalt thou never more.

Presently the voice of social satire was heard in the land. In tones that are harsh and often coarse, which must have been echoed by common men up and down the country, the vices of the nobles, the State, and the clergy were denounced. Song

[1] T. Wright, *Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to Edward II* (Camden Society, 1839); *Political Poems and Songs . . . Edward III to Richard III* (Rolls Series, 1859–61).

sided with the people against their governors, for instance in the *Song of the Husbandman*, which complains of the burden of taxes and the oppression of bailiff and woodward. Song rose even against the king when he was tyrannous and, like Edward II, dissolved his parliament to save his favourite. The repetition of rhymes at short intervals crystallized in the memory some rough truths which served as rallying cries to the multitude:

For might is right,
Light is night,
And fight is flight,
For might is right, the land is lawless,
For light is night, the land is loreless,
For fight is flight, the land is nameless.

Another poet anticipated Langland in his denunciation of all the vices of society: the law, the Church, the priest, the friars mendicant—all had been alike corrupted by love of money:

And if the rich man die that was of any might,
Then will the Friars for the corpse fight.
It is not all for the calf that cow loweth,
But it is for the green grass that in the meadow groweth,
So good.

when the news came, in 1302, of the defeat of the French chivalry by the burghers of Flanders:

Listen, lordings, both young and old,
Of the Frenchmen that were so proud and bold,
How the Flemish men bought them and sold,
Upon a Wednesday,
Better them were at home in their land,
Than for to seek Flemings by the sea strand,
Wherethrough many a French wife wringeth her hand,
And singeth, Welladay!

When the English were drawn into the struggle directly,

[1] J. Hall, *The Poems of Laurence Minot*, 3rd ed. revised (Oxford, 1914).

e king, to sing his victories in Scotland, Flanders, and France. hus he celebrated, soon after the events, Halidon Hill, the aval battle of Sluys, the siege of Calais, and other royal ploits.

The heavy and pitiless irony heaped on the vanquished in ese war-songs recalls the Anglo-Saxon verses. Yet with e triumph there is a certain gaiety which, although in oubtful taste, moderates that fierceness which belonged to e old poetry.

Edward and his soldiers are incomparable heroes; all their nemies are braggarts and cowards, false and perjured traitors. ut justice is surely not to be expected in poetry of this kind, which it is unessential and of which it might diminish the ffect. Such religious sentiment as mingles, here and there, ith the insults, has a purely conventional air, and, if it be incere, its sincerity is superficial.

In the absence of depth, we might hope to come upon the xact or picturesque details about the various fights which ould give substance to the poems without hampering their yrical swing. But there are none such. There is hardly lace for narrative in these songs: they do little more than hant the praises of the victors and cover the vanquished vith insults.

All the same, they are interesting. They bear witness to he national unity and to the high self-esteem which the English nation had acquired. These trumpet-calls are a pre-ude to the rich literature of the next generation. We see the English avenging themselves on the Scots for Bannockburn. We see the lilies trampled underfoot, France humiliated, who ad been so proud, so sure of herself, so disdainful.

It is the metrical form of Minot's songs which gives them their special value. They are written in the Northumbrian dialect and combine popular and artistic elements. Alliteration reigns everywhere, vigorously holding together verses which, none the less, are always rhymed. Sometimes the line seems to be the direct product of the old alliterative line, its rhyme being superadded. The rhyme and the very regular stanza, with its fixed form, derive from France. As often as not, moreover, the line is not purely accentual, but also as syllabic as the most correct specimens of the time. Conscious artistry is also shown in the frequency with which the most important word in the first line of a stanza echoes that in the last line of the preceding one.

All this makes of each poem a whole which owes much to deliberate arrangement, and, incontestably, the combined effect of these artifices of rhythm and structure is that Minot's poems have an impetus, a beguiling lyrical movement, not due to their thought. Nor does it proceed from their language, [illegible] y prosaic,

[illegible]

[illegible] sung in London, and Minot's poems were current in the countryside when Chaucer was born and when his mind received its first impressions. Glory in the field of battle was followed l literary achievement as brilliant. The long period of depe dence was about to end. The English language, which h

[illegible]

season in English literature.

This brilliant efflorescence was the result of the progre made in the two previous centuries. Their arduous a obscure task was gradually to merge the so disparate elemen of the new language in a harmonious whole. Whoev listens to the poetry attentively at first perceives discor and then becomes aware of the progress realized. So far, is only by flashes that beauty is reached, but already tl principles which should regulate style and verse have be discovered. The place of the old epic verse-form is not y filled, for it has not found a fit successor either in the t slender octosyllabic line, or in the line of fourteen syllabl which is onl [illegible] (8+6), but [illegible] ment. Sor [illegible] their tales f [illegible]

[illegible]

others, for it is on the eve of becoming the language of tl court as well as that of the countryman and the burghe As yet nothing is finished, but everything is ready.

BOOK II

THE FOURTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURI (1350-1516)—FROM CHAUCER TO THE RENASCEN

CHAPTER I

THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY (1350–1400)—ROUND ABOUT CHAUCER[1]

1. *England in the Second Half of the Fourteenth Centu Political and Social Conditions.*—The victories of Edward I made England conscious of her strength and unity, but, wi the exception of Minot's mediocre songs, they did not insp the nascent literature. It is remarkable that almost all t works which are the glory of the second half of the fourteen century appeared in the unhappy years between 1360 a 1400 which followed on the triumphant period.

It was in these years, after the treaty of Brétigny, th the political wisdom of Charles V won back for France almc all the English conquests, that the king, grown senile a luxurious, caused men to forget his exploits, and that h heir, the Black Prince, met with an early death. In the years also, the child Richard II began his reign, which was o of the most unfortunate England has known, whether duri the period of the regency, with its miserable rivalries, during that of the king's personal rule, capricious, arbitrar disorderly, and spendthrift. The Black Death wasted t people; the Kentish peasants made their formidable risi under Wat Tyler; French descents insulted English lan and Wyclif incited the religious schism which divided t population into the two parties of the Lollards and t orthodox. Yet it was during these seemingly calamito years that the poetry which is truly English had its fir season of flowering. Lamentations, satire, and denunciati fill the works which treat of politics or religion. Clergy ar

[1] Kenneth Sisam, *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose* (Oxford, 1921).

rulers are represented as equally corrupt and incapable, immoral and undisciplined.

Nevertheless this poetry, as a whole, has such an air of energy and youth as throws doubt on the importance to daily [illegible]

In spite of them, the country became more and more prosperous, the burgher class grew wealthy, and the people enjoyed a measure of independence as the Norman and English races came to be almost completely fused. In spite of everything, Merry England was born. There were inevitable miseries, but they left ample room for joy and hope. [illegible]

Wyclif.—The state of society is better understood after a [illegible] Its bulk is so small [illegible] hardly of value [illegible] English prose [illegible] in comparison with the activity of France and Italy and the value of their productions in this sphere. Villehardouin and Joinville were writing even in the thirteenth century, and France now boasted of Froissart, Chaucer's contemporary, while Italy had [illegible]

[1] C. Babington and J. R. Lumby, *Polychronicon Ranulphi Higden*, 9 vols. (Rolls Series, 1865–86, contains the Latin text and Trevisa's translation).

Latin of his original, and his awkward prose, in the archaic dialect of the south-west, is to-day chiefly interesting because his own additions show the changes which had come to England in the quarter of a century between himself and Higden.

Higden had given a striking picture of the variety of the languages and dialects spoken in England. He had deplored that southern and northern Englishmen were hardly comprehensible to each other. He had attributed the corruption of the English language to the circumstance that French alone was taught in the schools and used in translating Latin, so that the sons of nobles were trained in French from their cradles, and men of lowlier birth turned, from snobbish motives, all their energy to learning French.

But Trevisa assures us that all this, which was true in Higden's day, had been altered in 1385. For some eight years English had replaced French in the schools:

> Here avauntage is [he adds characteristically] in oon side and disavauntage in another side; here avauntage is that they lerneth her gramer in lasse tyme than children were i-woned to doo; disavauntage is that now children of gramer scole conneth na more French than can hir lift heele, and that is harme for hem and [if] they schulle passe the see and travaille in straunge landes and in many other places. Also gentil men haveth now moche i-left for to teche here children Frensche.

This abandonment of French, which was necessary to the growth of the language, showed its effects on prose literature only at a later time. For the moment English was used for nothing more venturesome than translations, either from French or from Latin.

The prose differs very much according to which of these two languages is that of the translator's original. As a rule, the style of the translations from French is markedly the more lucid and fluent, because of the great degree of identity which had come to exist between the syntax and construction of French and of English.

This is apparent if Trevisa's work be compared to *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*,[1] which was believed, until recently, to be an original work, and of which the authenticity and the authorship have successively given rise to long controversies.

It is now established that this pretended narrative of

[1] *The Buke of John Mandeville*, ed. by Warner with the French text (Roxburghe Club, 1889); *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, modernized version, ed. Pollard (1900).

journeys to Palestine and China is a fiction of the type produced by Defoe and Swift at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

melancholy, and gouty man, he told the tale of the extraordinary things he had seen on his road. In fact, this Sir John had never existed, but was the creature of the imagination of a French physician, Jean de Bourgogne, who amused him-

Marco Polo. It is curious that this literature based on a hoax, which was to root itself so deeply in England, first appeared in France.

The book, with its imaginary English hero, was naturally well received in England. Translated in 1377, it had a great success, and the manuscripts of the translation are very numerous. It was a work which evoked countless fantastic scenes—countries where men were fed only on serpents and

the scientific anecdotes of Pliny the Elder. The true and the false are closely intermingled.

writes prose. He translated from Latin to English, about the year 1381, the *Consolation* of Boethius, which, together with the *Roman de la Rose*, was his habitual reading. Of the two

le of Melibeus,'
ved from Jean
Consolationis
246), *while the*
ted from the

famous French sermon of Friar Laurence, *La Somme des*

[1] *The Student's Chaucer*, ed. Skeat (Oxford).

Vices et des Vertus. Chaucer also brought together several Latin treatises in his *Astrolabe*, a work intended to teach astrology to his son Lewis, then ten years old.

On the whole, Chaucer's prose conforms to the rule already stated: it is the more English for being translated from French, the stiffer for being translated from Latin. Everywhere, however, it has the qualities which mark a good writer. It would be easy to quote pages in which it attains to loftiness, as when Philosophy appears to Boethius in his prison, or passages showing precision and swiftness, like those which enumerate the misfortunes of poor Melibeus.

Except for his Boethius, in which he happily followed Alfred, Chaucer's choice of originals is regrettable. Their scholastic character hides the beauties of form which distinguish his style from that of his contemporaries. Chaucer was not, however, so much under the influence of the schoolmen that he failed to see where they were ridiculous. He would have us read his prose tales, especially 'Melibeus,' with a smile which makes them less dry and stiff.

All these are prose-writers who were translators. We have still to speak of a man who was by turns a translator and an original writer in prose, an author of mediocre prose who gave to English prose literature an impulse and an efficacy which were decisive. This was John Wyclif, called the first Protestant, the adversary of the papacy and the assailant of Catholic dogma.[1]

He was born about 1324, was a professor at Oxford and chaplain to Edward III, and was very learned in theology and in Roman and English law. He was drawn into that struggle between the king of England and the pope which was at once political and religious, and which broke out in 1365.

The prestige of the papacy had suffered by its defeat at the hands of Philip the Fair at the beginning of the century, and by the removal to Avignon. France had set the example of revolt against the financial claims of the Church of Rome. England followed, when Urban V demanded of Edward III arrears for thirty years of the tribute which John Lackland had promised to pay to his predecessor. An anonymous pamphlet defended Urban's claim, and Wyclif was charged

[1] *Select English Works of John Wyclif*, 3 vols., ed. Arnold (Oxford, 1869–71); *English Works of Wyclif, hitherto unprinted*, ed. Matthew (Early English Text Society, 1880). See H. B. Workman, *John Wyclif. A Study of the English Medieval Church*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1926).

:ook upon himself to answer it. He had already the spirit independence and the confidence in individual logic, as plied to the scriptural text, which characterize Protestant- . But he began with moderation, claiming merely to o the national hostility to Urban's demands. Gradually quarrel grew heated and enlarged its scope. Wyclif

ideas by means of the preachers who were called 'poor :sts,' and were soon to be known as Lollards. Educated poor men, clothed in coarse woollen garments, they went n parish to parish, opposing the friars against whom Wyclif l declared war. Their severe and practical sermons were :ontrast to the scholastic grandiloquence of the friars.

'rom 1380 onwards Wyclif's ideas, hardly different till n from those later enunciated by Langland or hinted by ıucer, had a new direction. They became an attack on ma, for he renounced belief in the Eucharist except as a ıbol, and attacked devotion to the saints and the use of ulgences.

Ie was forsaken by all his former friends. The Peasants'

Ie was, to begin with, the first translator of the Bible into vulgar tongue. He translated the New Testament, while :eford, his coadjutor, translated the Old. Undoubtedly translation is very faulty, for his aim was to be literal, and had a long habit of writing Latin and found it difficult to ain, late in life, to true English prose. He abounds in in constructions, makes too much use of relative clauses. vertheless he supplied the first elements of that biblical guage which was to be an integral part of English and to used for the famous Authorized Version of 1611.

Secondly, Wyclif first appealed directly to the nation by such leaflets and pamphlets as were to swarm in the days of the real Reformation. If Wyclif in these writings shows himself destitute of every artistic quality, he yet deserves recognition for the logic and the vigour with which he posed in them certain formulas.

The agitation which his doctrine and writings stirred into being must always be kept in mind when the literature of the end of the fifteenth century is studied.

3. *The Dialects. The Reappearance in the West of Alliterative Verse.*—It is poetry and not prose which is the glory of this age. The pith of the matter was there, rich and vital. But there was an obstacle to the birth of a literary era which should be harmonious and complete. For if classes were beginning to draw closer together and races to intermingle, the language of the country could not yet be said to have reached unity. The period is perhaps that in which the diversity of the dialects of England can best be perceived. Leaving on one side the small difference of speech which distinguished almost every country from another, there were at least four dialects which were struggling for supremacy, so equally matched that it was impossible in 1380 to say which of them would have the greatest future—the northern, southern, east midland, and west midland dialects. Each had its own literature, and the awakening in the fourteenth century had at first the effect of enriching all four together, so that confusion did not lessen but was intensified. The study of the literature of this century is therefore necessarily fragmentary. The critic first perceives that progress in the north, and more especially in the west, had been far slower than in the rest of the country. It is plain, even if vocabulary and grammar be left out of account, that these districts remained attached to the forms of the past. They kept their taste for alliteration, and at least one of them retained, surprisingly, the alliterative verse-form, almost pure and still vital, able to make a final struggle for life.

Since the Norman Conquest, alliterative verse had led a subterranean existence, showing itself, here and there, even in the south, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, then lost to sight, to reappear, abundant and flourishing, in the west of England about the middle of the fourteenth century. On the Welsh border and further north, in Lancashire and Cumberland, it prospered especially, as was natural since the Welsh March

was the part of England least accessible to French influence

lack of art and genius to excuse his use of the alliterative rather than the octosyllabic line.

assured prosody. Accent hovered, doubtfully, over the different syllables of words of French origin, and even Germanic words were infected by the uncertainty. The relation between rhythm and tonic accent was, in consequence, not clearly perceived. There were thus various reasons why the old verse-form should came back to life at the moment when the spirit of the nation was reborn.

The consequences of the return to the old form were that the poetry of the west regained an epic swing, resumed the use of

to-day as strange to read and as hard to understand as a line of *Beowulf*:

> Schon schene upon schaft schelkene blode.
> (Shone sheen upon the shaft the warriors' blood)

Nevertheless these alliterative poets do not, like some nineteenth-century poets, submit their vocabulary to the criterion of the exclusively Germanic. None of them makes it a rule to banish words of foreign derivation. The new language had so penetrated the people, even of remote districts, that statisticians find almost as many French and Latin words in the alliterative poems as in Chaucer. But these words have

ate is known. This translation of the French romance of he same name appeared in 1355. It is a real fairy-tale, its ero a prince of Spain changed into a wolf by his stepmother, ut retaining, in this fierce shape, his kindly nature. The ranslator follows the story faithfully but not slavishly, for e makes cuts and additions, adding chiefly some pretty lescriptions of nature and some artless homely details which edeem the rusticity of the language and the awkwardness of he construction. The alliterative verse is of very correct tructure, and keeps its native vigour, although neither the eauty nor the harmony of the best of the old models. Here, nore than elsewhere, the general defect of this verse-form in he fourteenth century is perceptible. The lack of rhyme is elt in the strongly rhythmic line. It is as though a hammer ell heavily on an anvil not of iron, but of wood, and gave out a dull and disappointing sound.

4. '*Sir Gawayn and the Grene Knyght.*' '*Pearl.*'—The four alliterative poems contained in a single manuscript and

poems have analogies of language and feeling which cause them usually to be attributed to the same poet. The dialect is that of Lancashire, the probable date round 1360–70 The author is unknown, and attempts to identify him with the Scottish poet Huchown of the Awle Ryale, who wrote a *Morte Arthur* and the *Pistil of Susan*,[1] or with the philosopher Strode, Chaucer's enigmatic friend, are no more than conjectural. If, however, it be admitted that there is question only of one poet, his works give some indications of the probable course of his life and cast of his mind. He was well versed both in the Bible and in profane poetry. He was familiar with castles, banquetings, hunts, and tournaments. He knew courtly society and he knew the country, even the wild and solitary country of the western hills. His life had periods of worldliness and periods of devout religious observance, but he was never careless of moral edification. The praise of purity and chastity is the dominant note of each of his poems. His only secular work is *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knyght*,

scenes of the temptation, and the theme, the triumph of chastity, is lightened by a smile. The poet gracefully delineates the feelings of the gallant knight, mirror of courtesy, caught between his politeness and his desire to remain pure,

in dramatic interest it is superior to Spenser. Gawain is really tempted, whereas Sir Guyon is temperance incarnate, and passes, bloodless and abstract, through the voluptuousness of the Bower of Bliss. The author of *Gawayne* draws a man where Spenser draws insensate virtue

There is also realistic vigour in the description of the three

of this poem. It has two stanzas which, before Tennyson, describe the year's cycle. The seasons succeed each other, and for Gawain their flight brings ever nearer the hour of his redoubtable tryst: the cold and gloomy winter gives place to the fructifying showers of spring; the birds sing and the flowers blow; then summer ripens the crops and hardens the

assaults of winter:

For werre[1] wrathed[2] hym not so much, that wynter was wors,

nes,

Elsewhere he passes through a mountain forest, with enormous oaks, whitened by the snow:

With roge raged[10] mosse rayled ay-where,

which owes much to all the earlier Arthurian romances, and especially to the *Perceval* of Chrestien de Troyes. But its special subject, the singular adventure which is its theme, are known only through this author. There is no reason why the 'stiff and strong' work to which he alludes as his source should not have existed. Anyhow, by his choice of incidents, his pictures and descriptions, and the grouping and proportioning of the parts which make a whole, he proves himself an experienced artist.

Strange is the entry of the Green Knight, a giant on a giant horse, into the great hall of Camelot, where King Arthur is keeping Christmas among the knights of the Round Table. He has come to try Arthur's knights. He will allow his head to be stricken by the great axe he holds in his hand, if the striker will swear to come in a twelvemonth and a day and receive a like stroke from him. As they all are hesitating, and Arthur, for the honour of the Round Table, is about to take up the challenge, Gawain claims the axe and severs the head of the unknown knight from his body. Unmoved, the giant picks up his head, calls upon Gawain to keep his word, and departs at a gallop, leaving all amazed.

When the year has passed, Gawain sets out, according to his promise, to find the Green Knight. Long is his quest through rugged, mountainous country. At last, on Christmas Eve, he finds himself before the comeliest castle he has ever beheld, and is very honourably received there. For three days he is the guest of a noble old man, who is master of the house, and of his wife, who is fairer even than Guinevere. Every morning the old man goes off hunting, and every morning the lady visits Gawain's chamber to tempt him with the offer of her love. The courtly but pure Gawain resists temptation, yet accepts from the amorous lady a girdle of green silk 'with gold schaped,' which shall preserve him from being slain. And when, thereafter, Gawain comes to his ordeal, the axe, falling on his head, does no more than cut his skin, in expiation of his fault in taking the girdle. Eventually his host proves to be the Green Knight, and his temptress Morgayn la Fay, who had undertaken to humiliate Arthur and his knights. Gawain returns to Camelot, and Arthur causes a band of bright green to be worn by each of the lords and ladies of his court for Gawain's sake.

This very well-written poem is remarkable for the liveliness and variety of its scenes. There is delicate psychology in the

scenes of the temptation, and the theme, the triumph of chastity, is lightened by a smile. The poet gracefully delineates the feelings of the gallant knight, mirror of courtesy, caught between his politeness and his desire to remain pure, all of whose virtue is preserved to him without a slur upon his gentleness. The story has many analogies with the tale of the second book of the *Faerie Queene*, but both in human and in dramatic interest it is superior to Spenser. Gawain is really tempted, whereas Sir Guyon is temperance incarnate, and passes, bloodless and abstract, through the voluptuousness of the Bower of Bliss. The author of *Gawayne* draws a man where Spenser draws incarnate virtue.

of this poem. It has two stanzas which, before Tennyson, describe the year's cycle. The seasons succeed each other, and for Gawain their flight brings ever nearer the hour of his redoubtable tryst: the cold and gloomy winter gives place to the fructifying showers of spring; the birds sing and the flowers blow; then summer ripens the crops and hardens the grain, and finally the leaves fall and the grass is grey.

The poet is never more at his ease or more original than

assaults of winter:

> For werre [1] wrathed [2] hym not so much, that wynter was wors,
> When the colde cler water fro the cloudes schadden, [3]
> Ner [4] slayn wyth the slete he sleped in his yrnes, [5]
> No nygtes then in-noghe [6] in naked rokkes,
> Ther as claterande fro the crest the colde borne [7] rennes,
> And henged hege [8] over his hede in hard ysse-ikkles [9]

Elsewhere he passes through a mountain forest, with enormous oaks, whitened by the snow:

> With roge raged [10] mosse rayled ay-where,

He has a striking vision of a misty morning in the 'each hill had a hat and a mist-cloak huge.'

Thus the Anglo-Saxon mist enwraps this poem of origin, a poem of chivalry and courtesy which has for he the Gawain whom a tradition, followed by Tennyson, ma the type of a quarrelsome, frivolous, and volatile knig Gawain of the unstained shield, who rivalled the va Lancelot and the chastity of Perceval and Galahad.

Pearl[1] is a poem entirely different in origin, structu atmosphere. It is an allegory which connects not w Arthurian cycle, but with the *Roman de la Rose*. The is not unacquainted with this poem, although since he of the '*pure* rose of Clopinel,' that is of Jean de Meu knowledge of its conclusion seems to be faulty. The a cal element of his work is combined with a symbolism d derived from the Apocalypse, whence he borrows his con vision of the New Jerusalem. This mixture constitu originality of the poem, and saves it from the dry f of the prevailing type of allegory, with its too conve frame. It acquires singular greatness and religious from its biblical inspiration. There is nothing in poetry of this period which better recalls Dante's visions or the refinements of feeling in Petrarch's son

The poet has lost his pearl, by which he means his da a child two years old who was doubtless called Marga such plays on words, originating in the Gospels, were fr among medieval theologians. He has lost her in a g she has passed through the grass into the ground, which that she lies in the churchyard in her grave. Ever mourning and weeping, he has often gone to the place she disappeared, and his grief has thus been somewhat a

On an August day he goes to this garden, and in spite flowers and scents which make it delightful, he groa wrings his hands, then lies down on the flowery grou sinks into a dream which transports his soul into the r the marvellous.

He is carried to a glorious country bathed in unima light, where the rocks are of crystal, the woods have which shine like burnished silver, and pearls of the Ori the gravel. He advances, to the sound of the joyous s

[1] Ed. by C. G. Osgood (1906); by I. Gollancz, with modern English (1907). See W. H. Schofield, *Symbolism, Allegory and Autobiograp Pearl*, Pub. of the Modern Lang. Assoc. of America (1909).

birds with flaming plumage, until he comes to a river with beryl banks and a bed of pebbles which are precious stones:

> As glint through glass they glimmer'd and glow'd,
> As streaming stars, when dalesmen sleep,
> In the welkin shine, on a winter night

It seems to him that Paradise must be on the further side, but he seeks in vain for a bridge or ford by which he can cross. Then he perceives, on the other bank, a child 'full debonair' and robed in glistening white. He recognizes that he has seen her already, and of a sudden his heart is filled with ineffable happiness. He can neither speak nor move, and fears that his least gesture may cause the vision to fade away.

pearls; and a marvellous and flawless stone is fastened in the centre of her bosom. He understands that this is the pearl he has lost for so long The child reproaches him gently for calling his pearl lost when she is in the beatitude of paradise. He would rejoice, were he a 'gentle jeweller.' He must not seek to reach her; the river between them is crossed only through death. But she tells him of her celestial life, her bliss as the spouse of the Lord. Is not the Kingdom of

The child cannot lead her father to the city of the blessed, but the Lamb has vouchsafed her the right to give him a sight thereof. She guides him towards the source of the river,

where she is.

The extent to which the poem borrows from the Apocalypse lessens its originality, the desire to edify overweights it,

here and there, with didactic and theological passages, and the descriptions might be called too flamboyant. None the less, there is no other allegory of the time which unites so much fervour with such beauty. When compared with *Pearl*, the most charming of the contemporary allegories, the story of the daisy, who is Chaucer's Queen Alcestis, is frivolous, for all its refinement and delicious roguery, and the most powerful of them, *Piers Plowman*, is chaotic and formless. In *Pearl* everything is harmonized to glorify purity, and at the same time a human emotion, the father's grief, in turn rebellious and resigned, gives dramatic movement to the whole poem. Through all that is imitation and through the burdensome weight of doctrine, there shines a rare refinement of feeling. Something exquisite in the poet's senses makes him susceptible to nature even in his moments of most devout mysticism.

Nothing less than this sincere pathos, this wealth of imagination, could have put life into the difficult and complicated stanza which the poet adopts. His highly alliterative line has four accents in a very marked iambic rhythm. The stanza has twelve lines, as rigorously disposed as the lines of a sonnet. It is indeed a sonnet which concludes with two couplets instead of two tercets. Further, the hundred stanzas of the poem are in groups of five, associated because the last line of the first of them recurs in the others like a refrain, so that the final rhyme of the first stanza is repeated five times. And the last word of each stanza recurs at the beginning of the next.

These rules are both strict and puerile, and the fact deserves to be noted because it throws the greater simplicity of Chaucer's versification into relief. Moreover, it is indicative of the tendency to over-refinement which afflicted the author of *Pearl*, in his remote district and with his out-of-date vocabulary.

The two other poems, which are in the same manuscript and are therefore attributed to the same unknown author, *Purity* and *Patience*,[1] are both in alliterative verse and without rhyme or stanzas. *Purity* is an epic narrative of the Fall of the Angels, the Flood, the Angels' Visit to Abraham, the Feast of Belshazzar, and the Fall of Nebuchadnezzar. *Patience* recounts the life of Jonah. In both, purity and submission to the divine will are, as in *Pearl*, the principal themes.

[1] *Purity*, ed. R. J. Menner (Yale University Press, 1920); *Cleanness*, ed. M. Day (1933); *Patience*, ed. H. Bateson (Manchester, 1918). Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. ii.

Although didactic they give much space to pictures,
ample rhythm and style are in harmony with the
descriptions, such as that of the Flood and that

whale's belly, but on the whole he is both serious and
His epic manner recalls Cynewulf, but has less verbal
ance and a less fluid melody, a more concrete outline a
weightiness.

5. *William Langland and his 'Piers Plowman.'*—
Langland's *Piers Plowman*, the most popular, if
artistic, poem, of the fourteenth century, also belong
west. It emanates, however, not from Lancashire
the west midlands and contains
take
guage
than that of *Gawain*. The verse is purely alliterati

Roman de la Rose.

Yet how much it differs in spirit from the Frenc
How national it is! How near the people! Its im
to the historian of morals and religion is such that has
forth, even from literary critics, an admiration which
sive in view of the lack in this work of the most elemen

That it appeared in three successive versions
the difficulty of studying it. There are three texts
unequal length.[1] The first, the shortest and least
dates from 1362, so that it followed close on the

here and there, with didactic and theological passages, an descriptions might be called too flamboyant. None the there is no other allegory of the time which unites so n fervour with such beauty. When compared with *Pearl*, most charming of the contemporary allegories, the story the daisy, who is Chaucer's Queen Alcestis, is frivolous, for its refinement and delicious roguery, and the most power of them, *Piers Plowman*, is chaotic and formless. In *Pe* everything is harmonized to glorify purity, and at the sam time a human emotion, the father's grief, in turn rebellio and resigned, gives dramatic movement to the whole poem Through all that is imitation and through the burdensom weight of doctrine, there shines a rare refinement of feeling Something exquisite in the poet's senses makes him susceptibl to nature even in his moments of most devout mysticism.

Nothing less than this sincere pathos, this wealth of imagination, could have put life into the difficult and complicated stanza which the poet adopts. His highly alliterative line ha four accents in a very marked iambic rhythm. The stanz has twelve lines, as rigorously disposed as the lines of a sonnet It is indeed a sonnet which concludes with two couplets insteac of two tercets. Further, the hundred stanzas of the poem are in groups of five, associated because the last line of the first of them recurs in the others like a refrain, so that the final rhyme of the first stanza is repeated five times. And the last word of each stanza recurs at the beginning of the next.

These rules are both strict and puerile, and the fact deserves to be noted because it throws the greater simplicity of Chaucer's versification into relief. Moreover, it is indicative of the tendency to over-refinement which afflicted the author of *Pearl*, in his remote district and with his out-of-date vocabulary.

The two other poems, which are in the same manuscript and are therefore attributed to the same unknown author, *Purity* and *Patience*,[1] are both in alliterative verse and without rhyme or stanzas. *Purity* is an epic narrative of the Fall of the Angels, the Flood, the Angels' Visit to Abraham, the Feast of Belshazzar, and the Fall of Nebuchadnezzar. *Patience* recounts the life of Jonah. In both, purity and submission to the divine will are, as in *Pearl*, the principal themes.

[1] *Purity*, ed. R. J. Menner (Yale University Press, 1920); *Cleanness*, ed. M. Day (1933); *Patience*, ed. H. Bateson (Manchester, 1918). Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. ii.

subjects, particularly the London burghers, by his senseless prodigality.

Are these three texts the work of one or of three succeeding authors? Critics have posed the problem and it is still unsolved. The data given by the several texts certainly do not make it easy to construct a consistent life of the poet.

It appears that he was called William Langland, or Langley, and was born in Shropshire about 1330, that is six years after Wyclif and ten before Chaucer. He lived for some time in the Malvern Hills, then, tonsured but only in minor orders, he settled in London, in Cornhill, with his wife Kitte and his daughter Calote, and followed the craft of a public scribe. Certainly he knew the law courts and legal language. We have the picture of a tall, gaunt man with shaven crown, who passed haughtily along the streets, neither greeting the serjeants nor doing reverence to lords and ladies, and whom many took for a madman. Yet he also represents himself, not without irony, as a sort of beggar, going from door to door and pleading his tonsure to excuse himself from working with his hands, earning a livelihood by singing a *Placebo* or a *Dirige* for those who gave him alms.

Whatever his life may have been, his work is that of a man of profoundly religious mind, who is indignant at the vices of a society Christian only in name. He gives first a satirical picture of the actual world, then a vision of the world as it would be if the teaching of the Gospel were truly practised. His poem may be summed up as a work of edification, never artistic in intention and very rarely so in fact.

We have seen that from the middle of the thirteenth century England had the habit of these social satires. The novelty of *Piers Plowman* consists in its ample scale, the relief into which certain realistic scenes are thrown in the course of the allegory, and the author's fervour and energy. His rare comprehension of the political and religious necessities of his time is also new. No less than Wyclif is he convinced of the need for a reform of the secular and regular clergy, although he does not follow Wyclif in dogmatic innovations. He recommends a parliamentary system in which the king, supported by the commons, would govern for the public weal. The boldness and novelty of his thought are, in this century, often astonishing.

The qualities of mind and heart which we feel that he

implied classification does not go beyond the titles.
all is disorder, incoherence, chaos. Moreover, the se
the lively scenes which form the attraction of the

The thought is as vigorous as ever, the tone has
often a new nobility, but the confusion is such

*and the Resurrection which gives much space to
a play with magnified stage directions.*

The scene is laid, as in the mysteries, betwixt
earth, and hell. Jews, soldiers, thieves, the multit
claimed Jesus at his entry into Jerusalem: the
r earth.

Heaven is a dramatization of a verse of the
Mercy and Truth are met together: Justice and Pe
ssed each other.' These abstractions have becom
whom some, severe and implacable, debate wi
ho are indulgent to human weaknesses, and a
nbrace, signifying thereby that Mercy will trium
rict Justice.

Finally a loud voice is heard to cry upon hell to
ates, and Christ, resplendent with light, enters t
ite of Satan.

These are the loftiest and most lyrical passages of
ork. Like gems, they would gain by extraction fr
atrix.

In this conclusion of the poem, Piers Plowman is
otten. He reappears, from time to time, but tra
anged to a symbol. Sometimes he seems to be
ith Christ Himself, who also was poor and worked
nds; sometimes he represents the mass of the
om pilgrim he has become the object of the pi
nscience, awakening from long sleep, finally sets
est of him.

Such, in brief, is this powerful and formless work.

ossessed of independent and real dramatic merit, and they re proof of close relations with the theatre of the time. They night be called two comedies, 'The Marriage of Lady Meed' nd 'The Confession of the Seven Deadly Sins.'

Lady Meed is 'wonderliche clothed,' wearing rings of recious jewellery on all her fingers, and on her head a crown cher than the king's. She is a powerful but dubious personge whose name has been perverted by the evil times to a bad ense. It once meant due retribution but now means prearication. She has a whole retinue of courtiers and flatterers who persuade her to evil. They prepare to wed her to False, nd her marriage contract has been duly drawn up, when the pposition of Theology causes the business to be carried to London, to the king's court, where the righteous, by their own ourage and the advice of Conscience and Reason, prevail pon the king to break off the marriage, and wreak justice pon the guilty, in spite of the devices of the wicked and their ribery of royal officers. There follows a lively description f the flight of False and his company, who take refuge with he Pardoners, the Merchants, the Minstrels, and the Friars n turn, and are gladly harboured by all of them.

'The Confession of the Seven Deadly Sins' is the sequel to a sermon by Reason, who also invites all sinners to seek 'seint Truth.' It is only the homely realism of his descriptions of the Seven Deadly Sins which is personal to Langland—for these seven are everywhere in medieval literature. Langland, however, makes them not abstractions but living beings, vitalized by the force of comedy and by many details taken from life. Of Covetousness and Gluttony he speaks with peculiar gusto. Abominable though the Sins may be, they are yet all capable of remorse. Repentance prays to God for all the kneeling sinners.

And have reuthe on thise ribaudes that repente hem here sore,
That evere thei wratthed [1] the in this worlde in worde, thougte or dedes.

The poem, which was already crowded, was more than doubled in length when it was rewritten for the last time, and acquired a sequel in the shape of a number of visions, grouped by the poet under three titles, graduated so that they hold out the hope of a clear arrangement. Having shown the ills and vices of actual life, he produces a triple vision, 'Do Well,' 'Do Bet,' and 'Do Best.' Unfortunately the benefit of the

[1] Angered.

The thought is as vigorous as ever, the tone has loftiness, often a new nobility, but the confusion is such that the

and the Resurrection which gives much space to dialogue, a play with magnified stage directions.

The scene is laid, as in the mysteries, betwixt heaven, earth, and hell. Jews, soldiers, thieves, the multitude who acclaimed Jesus at his entry into Jerusalem: these stand for earth.

Heaven is a dramatization of a verse of the Vulgate: 'Mercy and Truth are met together: Justice and Peace have kissed each other.' These abstractions have become angels, of whom some, severe and implacable, debate with others who are indulgent to human weaknesses, and all finally embrace, signifying thereby that Mercy will triumph over strict Justice.

Finally a loud voice is heard to cry upon hell to open its gates, and Christ, resplendent with light, enters thither in spite of Satan.

These are the loftiest and most lyrical passages of the whole work. Like gems, they would gain by extraction from their matrix.

In this conclusion of the poem, Piers Plowman is not forgotten. He reappears, from time to time, but transfigured, changed to a symbol. Sometimes he seems to be confused with Christ Himself, who also was poor and worked with His hands; sometimes he represents the mass of the faithful. From pilgrim he has become the object of the pilgrimage. Conscience, awakening from long sleep, finally sets forth in quest of him.

Such, in brief, is this powerful and formless work. Whoever

considers its ideas only, must give it high praise. Indignan at the degenerate Christianity of his century, Langland opposec to the practices of his time the essential and neglected virtues especially work and charity. His attacks on the vices of th clergy are such as were common and current in the Middl Ages. There was a precedent for them in the *Roman de l Rose* with Jean de Meung's Faux Semblant, not to go an farther. It should, however, be noted that the vice agains which Langland's satire is especially directed is not Hypocrisy Sloth and Avarice or Covetousness are rather the objects o his hatred. His satire, at its liveliest, is accompanied an directed by an intense religious fervour, unknown to d Meung and not found in Chaucer. He does not destroy bu seeks sincerely to cleanse and rebuild. He is impelled not b the need to free his reason, but by the desire to strengthe and purify the moral life of himself and those about him and at the same time to rid political and social life of thei worst iniquities. This aspiration, together with his choice of ploughman for his hero, gives him the appearance of a rebe against the aristocratic system and social inequalities. But hi real preoccupation is with the Christian life: the poor ar nearer to Christ than others, less removed from Him by th vices to which idleness leads. Piers, who is a ploughman, i also the Christian; if he be not Christ Himself, he is at leas one of the lowly of mankind, in whom Christ became incarnat and of whom He made His apostles.

As regards the form of this poem, Langland shows himsel powerless to build up a harmonious whole, but able to creat animated scenes, either comic or deeply pious. The vigorou and frank quality of his verses is striking. But partly be cause of his archaic versification and partly because of hi real lack of art, his verses never thrill the sensibilities a poetry should. He is neither an artist nor a musician. Thes two deficiencies must modify his reputation, and while hi work is of first-rate value to social historians, his literary meri is barely second-rate. In spite of the immense immediat popularity of his poem, he has almost no descendants. He i the last noteworthy writer of alliterative verse. A fe imitations in the beginning of the fifteenth century, an down to the sixteenth, a few sporadic essays which do not see to derive from him: there was nothing more. English vers acquired fixed forms within his lifetime, not, however, fro him but from Chaucer.

6. *Scotland. Barbour's 'Bruce.'*[1]—Meanwhile a change which had occurred in the north-east was fruitful of consequences. Northumbria had long been distinguished by the literature of the Angles, and, after a prolonged silence, had successively produced, in the first half of the fourteenth century, the *Cursor Mundi*, the *Pricke of Conscience* attributed to Richard Rolle of Hampole, and Laurence Minot's war-songs. The dialect spoken south of the Tweed was debased, but between the Tweed and the Firth of Forth it became more than a dialect, the rich and productive national language which was Scots. From the tenth century onwards Scotland constituted a nation made of mixed elements: in the north Scots who had ... without ... and the ... to that of Lancashire; in the Lothians English-speaking Northumbrians with an infusion of Scandinavians.

It was in the Lothians and the east of Scotland that that variety of literature in English which is Scottish literature developed and flourished, the literature of a people who for long were as much England's enemy as ever the French could be. The Scottish War of Independence from 1286 to 1342 made the Scots co... men north of the ... which, as Minot's ... reciprocate.

Scotland had in her recent history heroes to celebrate—Sir William Wallace, the Douglas, Robert the Bruce—and their half-historical, half-legendary exploits seemed to force poetry into existence.

About the middle of the fourteenth century the language of Scotland was hardly distinguishable from the Northumbrian dialect. Its most special characteristic was the effect of a French influence due to the alliance between Edinburgh and Paris which, from the thirteenth century onwards, drew some French courtiers to Scotland and many Scots to France. As words taken directly from France, without passage through England, were adopted into the language, so the spirit of the French versifying chroniclers penetrated the literature more than in England.

The octosyllabic line was most held in honour in Scotland,

[1] G. Gregory Smith, *Scottish Literature* (1919); *Specimens of Middle Scots* (1902). Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. ii.

and the general character of the poems shows that historical and practical sense which the Normans brought into literature in English. In its tone and form, Barbour's work is in the succession of all the tribe of rhymed chronicles since Gaimar and Wace. But it was Barbour's fortune to find a national subject of powerful interest. His frank simplicity and ardent patriotism lead us to overlook the almost consistently prosaic character of the thirteen thousand lines of his *Bruce*.

John Barbour, archdeacon of Aberdeen, of whom nothing is known save that he made two journeys to England and two to France, composed a *Siege of Troy* and some lives of the saints, but it is by his *Bruce*,[1] written between 1375 and 1378, that he has earned his place in literature. This poem is to Scotland what the *Chanson de Roland* is to France, the supreme national poem. The difference of the two in date is, however, such that the *Bruce* lacks the epical character of *Roland* and its element of the marvellous, and is a chronicle in verse, very nearly a history, its facts no more transformed than they would be by a patriot historian. It is not an epic but history, and recent history, hardly three-quarters of a century old when it was written, so that the author could get information from living witnesses. It is the work of a man who has investigated happenings and wishes to tell the truth. It was, as he states at the opening of his poem, his opinion that:

> Storys to rede are delitabill,
> Suppos that thai be nocht but fabill;
> Than suld storys that suthfast wer,
> Hawe doubill plesance in herying.
> The fyrst plesance is the carpyng,[2]
> And the tothir the suthfastnes
> That schawys the thing rycht as it wes;
> And suth thyngis that ar likand
> Tyll[3] mannis heryng are plesand.
> Tharfor I wald fayne set my will,
> Giff[4] my wyt mycht suffice thartill,
> To put in wryt a suthfast story,
> That it lest ay and with in memory,
> Swa that na lenth of time it let,
> Na ger[5] it haly be forget.

[1] Ed. by W. W. Skeat for the Early English Text Society. Extracts in Morris and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. ii.
[2] Telling. [3] To. [4] If. [5] Make.

only one hero, Robert the Bruce, the centre of the whole poem, and he intends that one moral idea shall reign over his whole work. The Bruce began his glorious career by a criminal act,
place of sanct
heart will the
his desire: this is the conclusion of the poem.

There is a greater amplitude in the ideas of freedom, patriotism, and independence which animate all these verses.

For the work is one of those in which matter is infinitely more important than manner. The subject in its naked simplicity is more arresting and wonderful than the most romantic imaginings of the Middle Ages. Nothing is more moving than this story of a struggle for independence maintained by a people fewer in number than their oppressors, whose yoke they had already felt, and who had seized their strong places and overrun their country with soldiers.

Deliverance sprang from the lowest depth of misery, when the Bruce took to the open country and for years led the life

to be more m
themselves.
the past lessc
when the glory of Bannockburn had been tarnished by sanguinary defeats. The misfortunes of his country in the first years of the Bruce's career had come of dissensions and of a foolish appeal to the king of England to decide the disputed

The case of John Gower[1] is very representative of prevalent conditions. He used Latin and French in turn, and reached the point of writing in English only late, probably under the influence of Chaucer's success. The date of his birth is unknown. Was he, as was long believed, some ten years older

on his language, which is hardly at all different from that of London and the court. He was a gentleman, possibly a clerk who did not take major orders. He was well read, and his library, if the word may be used, seems to have contained much the same French and Latin books as Chaucer's.

> En le douls temps ma fortune est amière,
> Le mois de Maij sest en yvern mué;
> Lurtie truis si jeo la Rose quière,
> Vous êtes franche et jeo suis fort lié[2]
> (*Ballade XXXVII*)

The third line at least needs translation—

> I find the nettle when I look for the rose—

for its language is not Parisian He is aware of the fact and excuses himself for it:

> Et si je n'ai du français la faconde,
> Pardonnez-moi que je de ce fors voie,[3]
> Je suis Anglais; si quiers par telle voie[4]
> Être excusé . . .

The very rhythm of his French verse tends to be Anglicized, to beat time to the iambic measure In spite of his effort after

[1] Complete works, ed. by G. C. Macaulay (Oxford, 1899–1902); selections ... See C. S. Lewis,

[3] I go astray. [4] And therefore I beg.

correctness, Gower proves better than any one else how artificial was this uprooted language, at once learned and corrupt. He reminds us of Chaucer's Prioress:

> And Frensch sche spak ful faire and fetysly,
> After the scole of Stratford atte Bowe,
> For Frensch of Paris was to hire unknowe.

Gower is the last in date of the Anglo-Norman poets. He deserves to rank among them less by a few little love-pieces than by his long poem, or rather his long sermon in verse, which is called *Speculum Meditantis*, or *Miroir de l'Homme*, and has recently been rediscovered. It is a sermon against the immorality of the age, and it justifies Chaucer's epithet of 'moral Gower' which was to cling to his friend's name for ever. This clerk, concerned especially to note and display the vices of his generation, was indeed much more a moralist than a poet. He is without a trace of that joy in life and pleasure in observing it which are so vivid in Chaucer. He compares what he sees with his ideal, that of a pious clerk and a student, finds all abominable, and condemns unreservedly.

Thus it was with his most remarkable work, *Vox Clamantis*, which was inspired by the Peasants' Rising of 1381 and which he elected to write in Latin. It is a very substantial poem which has real historic value, a pendant to *Piers Plowman* written by a member of the wealthy class, by a frightened landlord whose misfortune it was to live in Kent, the county in which the formidable rebellion broke out. Gower's terror gives these verses a strength and emphasis which are lacking in his other work.

This rising under Wat Tyler and Jack Straw began near Gower's land, and more than one of his tenants was doubtless among the rebels. It was during the first years of the minority of Richard II. The impoverishment of the Treasury, the levy of new subsidies for an unfortunate war, and the insolence of the farmers of the taxes had provoked popular anger and rebellion. Several tax-collectors were put to death, and after them lawyers, courtiers, and partisans of the real regent, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. The number of the rebels increased. One hundred thousand men marched on London, demanding the abolition of serfdom and the reduction of rents. A true social revolution had been let loose in the country, and for a moment the insurgents were masters of London, where they sacked the palaces of the Archbishop of

Canterbury and John of Gaunt. They destroyed but they did not steal: they even hanged a man in their own ranks for theft. Then the king rode out to meet them, and Wat Tyler, while in parley with him, was slain by the mayor. The king procured the dispersal of the rebels by promising redress of their grievances, then revoked his promise, and the rising was ended by cruel repressive measures.

Gower, now in his fifties, was haunted by this rebellion as by a nightmare. His interests were all on the side of the landlords. He had no sympathy with the popular cause, yet considered the ills of society
which were ruining the state.
are voiced in the Latin distic

The poet first has a vision of a crowd of members of the populace changed into wild beasts and uncurbed by reason—asses, fierce as lions, who will bear no more burdens, oxen who refuse to draw the plough, dogs who bark at huntsmen, cats who have reverted to wildness. A jay, who stands for Wat Tyler, harangues them, to the sound of shouts of 'Down with honour! Perish the law!' and at the tail of their company John Ball, an excommunicate priest, preaches on the text:

> When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Who was then the gentleman?

The swarming mass of people lays Troynovant, or London, waste. Its strength is broken by the death of the jay, but the ship of the state is still adrift and puts in at the island of Disorder. Then a voice from heaven advises Gower to write

and the lawyers. All are riddled with vice. The court is a

voice of God.

It is a great pity that this work, into which Gower has p the best of himself, his utmost sincerity of thought, vehemen of satire, and depths of narrow but coherent morality, shou have received the dress of a dead language, while on the o occasion when he used the speech of his country he work against the brain of his temperament and talent, and wro an entirely artificial poem.

For he did finally make up his mind to write in English, pe haps incited by the growing reputation of Chaucer, who ha already produced most of his works and was soon to begin *T Canterbury Tales.* It was about 1383 or 1384 that Gow composed his single English poem, his *Confessio Amantis,* a immense compilation of stories extending to forty thousar octosyllabic lines. He tells us he did it at the bidding King Richard, who charged him that 'some newë thing shuldë boke,' and thus he excuses his use of the vulgar tongu

And for that fewë men endite
In oure Englisshe, I thenkë make
A bok for King Richardës sake.

He has the credit of having sought, a little before Chauce a thread on which to string some hundred stories. The ide was not quite new: it had been exemplified in the *Speculu Historiale* of Vincent de Beauvais, the *Gesta Romanorum,* an the *Sept Sages,* to which the *Decameron* would have to be adde were it not clearly unknown to Gower as to Chaucer. The ide was a happy one, but how awkwardly Gower executed it!

He tells us with a sigh that he is going to sing of love, rathe than follow his own taste and write a moral book. Love the last subject he would choose for himself, but somethin must be conceded to the reader who prefers amusement t wisdom:

For thilkë cause, if that ye rede,
I woldë go the middel wey
And write a boke betwene the twey,
Somwhat of lust, somwhat of lore.

It happens that Venus, who has little fondness for hin advises him one day in May to make his confession to he priest Genius. The obedient poet goes to the confessiona and asks Genius to question him, point by point, thus sound ing his conscience in the article of love. Genius consent but declares that, in order that the confession may be complet he will be obliged, in the course of the examination, to spea

of the different vices. He will explain each of them by means of a story, so that the lover may know whether or no he have the same guilt on his conscience. When the confession has ended, Venus mocks this superannuated lover, who decides to withdraw.

The device allows the seven deadly sins, subdivided into many secondary sins, to defile through seven books. Genius has received a complete scholastic education, but he ceases to

his father's chariot carelessly, freezing and burning the earth by turns, so that Phoebus caused him, as a punishment, to fall from the chariot and be drowned.

haphazard, without trying to give them a frame. For as a

the Knight Florent which corresponds to the tale of the Wife of Bath.

This is as much as can be claimed for Gower. An almost immeasurable distance separates him from Chaucer. He is doing penance when he obliges himself to treat of love, under-

velleities of humour, but they are invariably abortive. There is too much reality in the awkwardness with which this poet

resigns himself to his distasteful subject. Once and again, a sigh escapes him because he cannot return to the moral teaching natural to him, and these regrets are the sincerest part of his poem. He is indeed, as Chaucer said, 'moral Gower,' and it is unfortunate that he ever forsook his role. Venus was right when she told him:

> And tarie thou mi court nomore
> But go ther vertu moral dwelleth,
> Where ben thi bokes, as men telleth,
> Whiche of long time thou hast write.

And we are grateful to Gower for having made the goddess own Chaucer for her true disciple and poet:

> Of dités and songés glad
> The whiche he for my saké made
> The land fulfilled is over al.

Gower, learned, industrious, and copious, is the typical average poet of his century. His writings are what Chaucer's might have been without Chaucer's genius

CHAPTER II

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (1340?–1400)[1]

ucer best expresses his Century.—All the writers of this
:al some aspect of contemporary life and of prevail-
g and thought. The author of *Pearl* shows us the
1 of refined minds, Langland the anger which was

f patriotic Scottish poetry. Each had his own plan,
nant and, *on the whole, narrow passion, a character*
is local and of his time. Each was enclosed within
s of a restricted experience, if not within those of a
icapable of expansion and without a future.
haucer's distinction that he turned impartial, eager,
-sighted eyes not only on the past, which his books
d to him, but also on all the society of his time, on
:ountries, and on every class in his own country.
reflects his century not in fragments, but completely.
n this, he is often able to discern permanent features
the garments of a day, to penetrate to the everlasting
f human action. His truthful pictures of his age and
contain a truth which is of all time and all countries.

He was born in London about 1340, the son of a city wine-merchant, and therefore by birth a member of the burgher class. At seventeen, however, he was a court page, for whom a pair of red and black breeches was provided. Two years later he became a soldier, took part in the campaigns of Artois and Picardy, was captured by the enemy, and remained a prisoner until the king paid his ransom. After his return to England he was attached to the king's person, first as valet and then as squire, but his great patron was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster and son of Edward III. From the age of about thirty he was charged with diplomatic missions to France, Flanders, and Italy, in succession. He was granted a pension and also, in 1374, the office of comptroller of the duties and aids on wools, hides, and wine in the port of London. In this way, as a courtier, he was again brought into touch with the London burghers among whom he had been born. In 1385 he was released from his office of comptroller, and in the next yeaı he was returned to Parliament as a knight of the shire of Kent.

Lancaster's disgrace supervened, and Chaucer fell on evil days. He lost his place and part of his pension, but was accorded other favours when the duke returned to power. For a time he was clerk of the king's works at Windsor, and by Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, he was made forester. He relapsed into poverty, but his fortunes recovered just before his death in 1400, when the son of John of Gaunt usurped the throne as Henry IV.

Thus his life was active and his employments diverse. He was page, squire, diplomat, and official in turns. He mingled with courtiers, soldiers, and city burghers and merchants. He had dealings with foreigners in Flanders, France, and Italy. And throughout he remained, for such part of his days as his official duties left free, an impassioned student and untiring reader.

What is most striking in Chaucer is the interest he took in every one of the different worlds through which he passed and all his heterogeneous occupations. He was at his ease at court, among traders, among clerks, with the people. To observe was as much his joy as to read. It is inconceivable that there was an hour of his life whence he did not extract pleasure. He could bear a heavy burden of work, easily, with the air of an idler whose life is all pleasure. The literary work he accomplished is considerable in extent, but far more remark-

able for the radiance of his sympathy and the length and breadth of his clear vision.

2. *His Part in the Formation of English Poetry.*—We know

this involved it is only necessary to remember the state in which he found the versification and the poetic language of his dialect.

It is hard [illegible]
creator of I[illegible]
line already [illegible]

He imported the decasyllabic line from France and, under Italian influence, made it pliable. It became the heroic line which was the surpassing vehicle of the great poetry of England. We have seen that the progress of this poetry was barred by the lack of a verse-form at once ample, ductile, noble, and sonorous. Chaucer used the new line alternatively

which his name has since attached, and the couplet. But what fashioning and refashioning, what experiments and doubts, this presupposes! All his youth and part of his maturity must have been mainly dedicated to this labour which,

Chaucer's first act of faith in the only tongue which was to him a living language, notwithstanding he clearly saw its defects, was to inculcate in it all the delicacy and refinement he perceived in the poetry of France. He disregarded the debased, artificial, and prosaic Anglo-Norman, and went straight to the Continent to seek masters and models.

To wed the vocabulary of his native land to the courtliness of France was his first essential task. He recast English words —that is, surviving words of Teutonic origin and acclimatized words of French origin—in the moulds of the French poets. He expressed in English all the graces and refinements he found in the poetry of France.

Unlike the authors of *The Grene Knyght* and *Piers Plowman*, he definitely broke with the Anglo-Saxon literary tradition. His face was turned to the south, and he took the whole of his ideal from the Continent.

He might be thought unlucky in his time. There never was a period in which French poetry was apparently more frail and destitute than that which intervenes between Rutebeuf and Villon or between the *Roman de la Rose* and Charles d'Orléans. In this poor, meagre, and pretentious garden there was little but artificial flowers to cull. And, because of the accident of date, it was from one of the most debilitated of the French poets, Guillaume de Machaut, that Chaucer took his first lessons. He could learn from him neither animation nor vigour, nor frankness of style, nor strength oi feeling and thought. But Machaut was refined, as much a musician as a poet. Although not a great artist he was yet pure artist, and well fitted to give the young Englishman the teaching he needed in the rules of his craft. In France, it was Machaut who chiefly propagated the poems made in fixed forms, the ballades, roundels, *chansons royales*, and it was from him that Chaucer learned to use these forms for his lyrical verses. For his narratives and descriptions he is no less in debt to Machaut's lays. He often also emulates those French pupils of Machaut who were his contemporaries, Eustache Deschamps, Froissart, Otto de Granson. His work is full of details borrowed here and there. He followed with slightly ironic curiosity a tenson on the comparative merits of the Leaf and the Flower. He took part in the symbolic cult of the Marguerite or daisy, which in the second half of this century, out of deference to some great ladies named after that flower, superseded that of the Rose.

Nevertheless, it was above all to the *Roman de la Rose* that he owed his initiation as a poet. At some unknown moment

practice, calculated to bring discipline into the versification and style of a young poet. If he did not always attain to such fresh colours and sonorous rhymes as Guillaume de Lorris, it is that he was hindered by his interpreter's task and by a language as yet unformed. He was conscious of the fact. He complained that 'ryme in Englisch hath such skarsetē,' and meanwhile he practised to such good purpose that he brought nearer the day when this difficulty disappeared.

The *Roman de la Rose* did more for him than discipline his style. It was the work which had the most comprehensive and constant hold on him. Its double character, due to the difference, amounting to contrast, between the two poets who composed it, did not shock Chaucer as an interruption of unity, but made this work—this Bible of poetry—doubly attractive to him.

Guillaume de Lorris

his delicate grace a

caught him first, in his youth. Later it came to pass that the flood of ideas, satire, and classical reminiscences, which rolls through the work of Jean de Meung, was better suited to his need of more solid and humorous nourishment, and this poet began and continued to charm him more than any other, so that he borrowed from him again and again, even for his final masterpiece.

The first effect of the *Roman* was, however, in one sense to pervert his genius while it helped to fashion his style. It led

often so dangerous to formal beauty, of representing life directly.

ɔared from his more ambitious poems, to prove the virtu-
ɜity of which he was capable in this field. He was certainly
ıe equal of the most skilled of his fellows in France, and often
e imported a characteristic of his own into these conventional
ɔrms—his pity, always moved by the sufferings of a woman,
ı the *Compleynt of Anelida*, the savour of his homeliness, or
ıis humour which makes jests against himself. In his *Ballade*
f Griselidis, which is his triumph in the field of lyricism, he
ningles the extreme artifice of a learned craftsman with the
nost comic sportiveness. But in these works he merely gives,
ıs in play, some proofs of his mastery of their style. He turns
from them to that domain of narrative in verse which is
properly his and in which he did almost all his work.

It took him a long time to decide on direct narrative. He could not at first rid himself of the poetic artifices of the age. From the time of the *Roman de la Rose* every poem begins with a dream which leads to an allegory, and for many years Chaucer let himself be carried along by this current. He accepted the received formula almost as though it were a necessity, submitted to such restraint without apparent effort, merely inserting, from time to time, an episode or a detail which expressed his nature or is the medium of his comments.

The first of his poems which can be dated is *The Boke of the Duchesse*, written on the death, in 1369, of Blanche of Lancaster, the wife of John of Gaunt, in order to sing her praises and depict the grief of her husband. This voluminous and composite funeral monument, astonishing to-day by the artificial rather than ingenious complexity of its plan, yet reveals, here and there, the poet's nature. Flowers which are fair, fresh, and delicate grow abundantly between the stones of this flamboyant architecture. In the poem Chaucer represents himself as a lover racked by sleeplessness, reading from the *Metamorphoses* the touching story of Ceyx and Alcyone. When finally he does fall asleep, he dreams that he is present at a hunt of the Emperor Octavian, and that while endeavouring to follow it he discovers in a wood a handsome knight, all clothed in black, who is mourning and who describes to him the charms of his lost and well-beloved wife, and the ineffable joy he knew during his too brief union with her.

As though to assert its origin, the poem abounds with imitations of the *Roman de la Rose* and Machaut's *Dits*. It is, moreover, an occasional poem, inspired by the desire to please the Duke of Lancaster by transfiguring his grief. It suffers from

prolixity and makes, at a first reading, an impression of some confusion. Nevertheless, whoever reads it, remembering its date, and compares it with the existing English verse, is struck by the progress it marks. It is the first poem in this language to contain fully artistic passages. The lines which are the farewell of the phantom Ceyx and relate the death of Alcyone are the perfection of simple pathos. Nothing could surpass their harmonious tenderness, their exquisite restraint, and the grace and aptness of their divisions and their rhymes:

> 'And farewel, swete, my worldes blisse!
> I praye God your sorwe lisse.
> To litel whyl our blissë lasteth!'
> With that hir eyen up she casteth
> And saw nought. 'Ah,' quod she for sorwë,
> And deyd within the thriddë morwë.

Over and over again the allegory gives place to realism. A conversation, on the whole both probable and lively, is held between the poet and the unknown knight, and if this partly dramatic character of the poem be given full value, it will be seen to modify its defects, and even to excuse them by giving them probability. The mourner's prolixity and repetitions and his confused enumeration of his lady's virtues are in place in this sudden outpouring of his feelings. They make the picture appear less circumscribed and didactic. There is a pathetic element in the very exuberance and incoherence of this overflowing sorrow. Already, too, there is a hint of humour in the appearance of the questioner, the poet himself, who figures, on this his first coming into his own poetry, as a man 'of little wit,' slow of understanding, amazed by the spectacle of a strong passion of which the lyricism is beyond him.

Chaucer was again to have recourse to allegory in 1382, when he wished to celebrate the betrothal of Richard II and Anne of Bohemia, this being the probable subject of his *Parlement of Foules*. The frame is even more heavily laden than is that of *The Boke of the Duchesse*, for Chaucer had read much between the dates of the two poems, and had added Latin and Italian models to those he found in France; for instance, Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* and Boccaccio's *Teseide*. He again represents himself as falling asleep after reading. This time his book is the *Somnium Scipionis*, and it is Scipio in person who appears to him in his dream to lead him to marvellous gardens where Venus has her temple, but where Nature is

is charming. It is Chaucer, the conventional poet, at his most graceful and most personal. He has an unstudied expansiveness, tells us again how much he loves the books which hold all the stories, which he leaves only in the month of May to go to the meadows and pay duty to Nature personified in the daisy. It is when he has spent a whole fine day admiring the little flower he so loves, that he dreams at night in his arbour where he 'bad men sholdë me my couchë make.' He sees:

> The God of Love, and in his hande a quene,
> And she was clad in reāl habit grene.

Her head is crowned with a garland of daisies,

> For al the world ryght as a dayēsye
> Ycorouned ys with whitē levēs lyte,
> So were the flourons of hire coroune white.

Behind the royal couple walk nineteen most noble ladies,

> And trewe of love thise wemen were echoon.

The god finally perceives the poet on his knees before a daisy, and chides him for daring, all unworthy, to approach love's flower. Is he not love's heretic, since he has translated *The Romaunt of the Rose*? Has he not, by depicting Criseyde's unfaithfulness, thrown suspicion on all women? The good queen intercedes for the poet, who has also, she says, written books of pure love and devotion. She asks leave to choose his penance, and decrees that he shall compose a glorious legend of virtuous women, virgins and wives, who were loyal in their lives, and tell also of the knaves who betrayed them. It appears during the course of the prologue that the good queen is Alcestis, that incomparable wife who sacrificed herself in order to give back life to Admetus. We are thus led to see a glorified Anne of Bohemia in this Alcestis, and her young husband, Richard II, in the handsome and irritable god of love. As for the nineteen fair ladies in the train of Alcestis, they are those whose virtue the poet is commanded to celebrate.

Chaucer begins by throwing himself into his task. He always excels at depicting the self-denial and suffering of women in love, and he makes use of ancient sources, especially Ovid's *Heroides*, to write several most pure and touching legends, those of Thisbe, Lucretia, Philomela, and Ariadne, among others. But the same mocking good sense, which prevented him from finishing *The Hous of Fame*, came to whisper irreverently in his ear as he was writing out his legends,

die by starvation, but the poet compensates by the moving, homely complaints he puts into the mouth of the youngest child who weeps for a little bread. Chaucer was not made, like Dante, to plunge into hell or rise to paradise.

He probably knew Petrarch personally, saw him at Padua, and heard him read his story of Griselda in Latin. He retained high respect for this poet:

> Fraunces Petrark, the laureat poete,
> Hightë this clerk, whose rethoriquë swete
> Enlumynd al Ytail of poetrie.

But Chaucer could not follow in the footsteps of the great humanist, so near to the ancients, so cognizant of philology, so much ahead of his contemporaries on the road of the Renascence. As for Petrarch the sonneteer, his excessive subtlety and his idealism refined to a quintessence could not appeal to a nature as normal as Chaucer's, whose tenderness was never far removed from joviality.

It is significant that Chaucer's only important borrowing from Petrarch is the story of Griselda, a Latin translation of the last of Boccaccio's tales. Boccaccio was assuredly the Italian to have most influence on Chaucer, who, none the less, never mentions his name. Boccaccio provided him with some of his most remarkable stories, and also, almost invariably, with a model for the most splendidly decorated and warmly passionate of his verses. It was, however, only Boccaccio the poet and the compiler of *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* and *De Claris Mulieribus* whom Chaucer knew. He does not seem ever to have read the *Decameron*, for all that he was to figure to posterity principally as the storyteller who rivalled Boccaccio.

Chaucer's debt to the poems of Boccaccio's youth is especially considerable. He condensed and abridged the *Teseide* to make his 'Knight's Tale,' retelling the story of the rivalry of Palamon and Arcite, two youths who were as brothers, their affection heightened by a shared captivity, until the day when love for the same maiden brought them to face each other as enemies, armed for a fight. Chaucer, adapting freely, was able to extract from the exuberant *Teseide* the romance of sentiment which is buried in those pseudo-epical ten thousand lines. He kept the best of Boccaccio's descriptions, yet introduced homely scenes of his own, and made Theseus into a humorous personage after his own mind.

intact, the tragic elements of his theme and the sentimental beauty of the youthful leading characters, but everywhere he rearranges, transforms or creates anew, the character-studies. Even thus Shakespeare faithfully retells the love of Romeo and Juliet, but develops the characters of the nurse and old Capulet on original lines and creates Mercutio. Whatever force the tragic and sentimental scenes of the English dramatist may have, they are rarely the element in their plays which is most personal to them. It is with the comic that they are especially concerned. Chaucer, by instinct, made a precedent for the great national dramatist who wrote more than two hundred years after him.

Although his *Troylus and Criseyde* does not quite conceal his efforts to reconcile originality and imitation, although it has lost the just and certain proportions of its model, and makes exotic Neapolitan flowers bloom beneath unquiet Kentish skies, it is yet an admirable work, astonishing if its date be remembered, far superior in point of style and versification to anything in contemporary English literature. And from the fact that he felt himself hampered while he wrote it, Chaucer learnt a fruitful lesson. Instead of pursuing further these imitative exercises which left him only half his freedom, he sought a subject which should be truly his own. In his *Troylus* he was half Italian and half English. In his masterpiece he was to be all English.

5. '*The Canterbury Tales*.'—Up to this time Chaucer's work, although he sought inspiration in France and Italy, or rather because he was the too docile pupil of foreign masters, is interesting mainly to the English. He deserves admiration for having civilized his country poetically, but he had spent his strength almost entirely on translating and adapting. He was still no more than the 'great translator' praised by Eustache Deschamps, the word being taken in its wide sense. His part was that of interpreter between the Continent and his country. Who could have hoped that, as he neared his fiftieth year, he would suddenly be revealed as himself a master, the painter of English society, and the creator of a work which in this fourteenth century would leave the contemporary poetry of France far behind it, and even, in some respects, that of Italy also?

The genius which was to flower had been his from the beginning. He did not suddenly become an observer. He had already seen and retained much, although hitherto he had not

found among his models a mould in which to cast his observations. Without doubt, there was already that rich diversity in his nature which made him curious of the beautiful and the ugly alike, which was compounded of poetry and prose, piety and scepticism, grace and humour. When, however, he wished to house this complexity, he found only literary forms apt to isolate one or other of its aspects. He had been held by allegory or lyrical narrative when his genius was impelling him, irresistibly, towards dramatic and realistic storytelling, the weaving of a web in which the threads would be both comic and sentimental.

So far, he had brought only two considerable poems to completion, the one a mere translation of the *Roman de la Rose*, the other his adaptation of *Il Filostrato*, a poem whose original harmony he disturbed by his efforts to introduce into it matter of his own. He had begun two other important poems, but had been unable or unwilling to finish them. *The Hous of Fame* discouraged him by the factitiousness of its allegorical machinery and the use, or rather abuse, of personified abstractions which its plan entailed; he wearied of *The Legende of Goode Women*, because it imposed on him a [illegible], obliged him, by its prel[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] as life and [illegible] moods, stories in which he could be lyrical and epical by turns, which he could tell tenderly, swiftly, poetically, feelingly, humorously, or merrily?

It was at this moment that he bethought him of the collections of stories of which several had been made in the Middle Ages, on the plan so awkwardly reproduced by his friend Gower in the *Confessio Amantis*. The *Decameron* would undoubtedly have stimulated him further had he not been, to the best of our knowledge, unaware of it. Yet even Boccaccio's example was not such as to fulfil his aim of variety. That society of elegant young gentlemen and ladies, hardly distinct from each other, telling tales while the plague raged in Florence, was not the band of storytellers he wanted. It was strongly individualized narrators, taken from the most diverse classes, whom he wished to interpose between himself and his readers. And at last he had the very simple and yet quite novel idea of a pilgrimage which would unite people of every condition. Since the spring of 1385 he had been living at

Chaucer has collected the descriptions of the pilgrims in his general prologue, which is a true picture-gallery. His twenty-nine travelling companions make almost as many portraits, hung from its walls. They face us, in equidistant frames, on the same plane, all hanging on the line. Chaucer is a primitive, aiming at exactness of feature and correctness of emblem. He is a primitive also by a certain honest awkwardness, the unskilled stiffness of some of his outlines, and such an insistence on minute points as at first provokes a smile. He seems to amass details haphazard, alternates the particulars of costume with the points of a character, drops the one for the other, picks either up again. Sometimes he interrupts the painting of a pilgrim's character to put colour on his face or his tunic. It is an endearing carelessness, which hides his art and heightens the impression he makes of veracity:

> Ses nonchalances sont ses plus grands artifices.

Who ever enters this gallery is first struck by some patches of brilliant colour, dominating one or other of the portraits, the Squire's gown:

> Embrowded was he, as it were a mede,
> Al ful of fresshē floures, white and reede,

and near him the Yeoman who serves him 'in coote and hood of grene.' How the Prioress's rosary 'of smal coral,' with its decades, 'gauded al with grene,' and its hanging brooch 'of gold ful schene,' stands out against her dress! There are faces as strongly coloured as any of the fabrics or accessories—the pustulous countenance of the Sompnour, 'a fyr-reed cherubynes face,'

> With skallēd browēs blak, and pilēd berd,

and the Miller, whose beard 'as any sowe or fox was reed,' with his wart whence sprouts a tuft of red hairs, his wide and black nostrils, and his mouth 'as wyde as was a gret forneys.' There are also duller colours to rest the sight, and to make the cruder hues more brilliant by contrast. The pious and modest Knight was 'nought gay':

> Of fustyan he werede a gepoun,
> Al bysmotered with his habergeoun.

The poor Clerk was 'ful threadbare,' the Man of Law 'rood but hoomly in a medled coote,' the Reeve wore a 'long surcote of pers,' or blue, and the good Parson is drawn without line or colour, so that we are free to imagine him lit only by the light of the Gospel shining from his eyes.

Essential moral characteristics are thrown into relief with the same apparent simplicity and the same real command of means as the colours and the significant articles of clothing. Mere statements of fact, suggestive anecdotes, particulars relating to calling and individual traits, lines of summing up a character—all these make up a whole which stands out upon its canvas. The outline is strong and clear, although sometimes a little stiff, in the steady light which is shed on it, and it is unforgettable.

Chaucer was not content to make his pilgrims typical only of their several callings. Sometimes a classification of another kind crosses with that by trades and enriches it. Thus the Squire stands for youth and the Ploughman for the perfect charity of the humble, while in the Wife of Bath there is the essence of satire against women. Nor is this all. Chaucer, by details he has observed for himself, puts life into conventional descriptions and generalizations made by others. He adds individual to generic features; even when he paints a type he gives the impression that he is painting some one person whom he happens to have met. He mixes these two elements in varying proportions and with great although imperceptible skill His figures, a little more generalized, would be frozen into symbolism, mere cold abstractions, while a few more purely individual features would cause confusion, destroying landmarks and leading attention astray.

Thus English society, which to the visionary Langland eemed a swarming and confused mass, a mob of men stumling against each other in the semi-darkness of a nightmare, s distributed by Chaucer among a group which is clearly een, restricted in size, and representative. Its members pause before us long enough for us to identify each one. Each has his own life and an identity which is for all time, yet together they sum up a society

Chaucer does not only draw frank or delicately traced portraits which give to his characters the immobility of permanence. He also makes each pilgrim step out of the frame in which he first placed him. The artist does not pass straight rom portrait to tale. He does not let us forget, on the road Canterbury, that each storyteller is a living being who has s own gestures and tones. As the cavalcade pursues its rse, the pilgrims talk among themselves. The poet shows m calling to each other, approving each other, ab... abbling. They criticize each other's stor...

their preoccupations, feelings, and interests. In this way comedy of action goes through the whole poem, connects i different parts, a comedy which is no more than sketche yet is adequate, in its incompleteness, to reveal the author intentions and his dramatic vigour. The persons he ha painted are again discovered by their own acts and words As always happens when an analytical portrait gives place to a direct presentment, some of the pilgrims are found to be more complex, their limitations less discernible, their characteristics more numerous, and their outline less definite than had appeared. This is certainly true of the famous Wife of Bath, indubitably the most vigorous of Chaucer's creations, who lives less by her tale than by the immense monologue in which she gives outlet to her feelings as she rides along the road. As she speaks, she seems to be magnified before our eyes, to overflow the exact boundaries which the portraitist set to her personality, and to acquire pantagruelian dimensions. Not until Panurge and Falstaff arrived was there her like in literature. The same is true of the Host of the Tabard, the pilgrims' jovial guide, who is barely sketched in the prologue, but who, little by little and by successive touches, by his various remarks as they journey, is made to tell us much of his temper, his tastes, his dislikes, and his private life. He is all the more real and living for never being analysed.

The tales gave Chaucer one means of finishing the portraits f his pilgrims. He found them in every corner of medieval terature, as diverse and unequal as he could wish. The poet sed their lack of originality to impart an added probability to s poem, for his pilgrims are supposed not to invent but to tell stories. Above all, he used the tales to characterize the lers. He choose for each of them a story suited to his clas and character, or, at least, he did this admirably where he ha time. His first plan was immense, each of the thirty pilgrim undertaking to tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two on the way back, so that there would have been one hundred and twenty tales altogether. In fact, Chaucer was not able to allot even one story to each of his travellers, nor, still more regrettably, had he time in every case to adjust story to teller. He was still hesitating about the assignment of certain tales when death surprised him. Enough was, however, accomplished to allow us to appreciate his design and his executive talent.

In a certain number of cases, the tale is so subordinate to

the vast comedy in which it has place that its original form has a little suffered. More often, it is its meaning which is changed. It is possible to consider a story by itself to judge whether the writer has succeeded in his aim of producing the strongest possible impression by his distribution of the parts, his manipulation and unravelling of the plot, and his arrangement of details in view of the surprise of the conclusion. The excellence of a tale then depends simply on the skill with which its thread is followed, and on the grace or liveliness of its writing. But the same story may be told to reveal an alleged narrator. It then behoves the author to conceal himself, to sacrifice his own literary talent and sense of proportion, and give place to another, who may be ignorant, garrulous, clumsy, foolish, or coarse, or moved by enthusiasms and prejudices unshared by his creator. Chaucer follows this

Bath, the Pardoner, and the Yeoman of the alchemist Canon.

Elsewhere, the very fact that a story is assigned to a par-

its conventual atmosphere.

Chaucer goes so far as to give us stories which he invites us to think repellent or ridiculous The Monk recites a litany of lugubrious and monotonous 'tragedies,' which sadden the

is not

inter-

from

The

Host of the Tabard chides him for singing a chivalrous ballad, with rhyme but without reason. In such instances as these,

of the poem. Chaucer's own contribution is of varying importance. In the serious, strictly poetic part of *The Canterbury Tales*, his original work is very slight: he makes only insignificant additions, restrained in detail, to his borrowed material, and his merit is mainly in his style, which is often admirable for simple pathos and gentle humanity. The comic and realistic stories, which have analogies with the French fabliaux, are in very different case. These he has so much enriched that he might be called their creator. He deserves this title, at least in part, even when he is compared to the author of the *Decameron*, who put so much heat and red blood into a literary form usually of the driest. While, however, Boccaccio observed the conciseness proper to this form and did no more than paint manners, Chaucer, less condensed and less passionate, addressed himself more and more to the study of character. He repeats within several of his stories that effort to capture individuality which is the glory of his prologue. Boccaccio is on the road to picaresque fiction, but Chaucer is pointing the way for Molière and Fielding. As we read the *Tales*, especially those of them which are humorous, we have constantly the impression that a birth is in progress. A leaven of observation and truth is fermenting within these established literary forms, which once had a perfection of their own, but which are narrow and about to be discarded. In this travail, modern drama and the modern novel are showing their first signs of life.

6. *Conclusion.*—If all this poet's work be regarded together, he is clearly seen constantly to have advanced nearer truth. He found poetry remote from nature, its essence being fiction in the accepted belief, while its task was the ingenious transposition of reality in accordance with artificial rules. In the beginning Chaucer submitted to the received code, dreamt with his contemporaries, like them had visions of allegorical figures and combined imaginary incidents. Or he sought the matter of his poems in books, borrowing his subjects and characters. Then, by degrees, he reached the point of deeming nothing as interesting and as diverse as Nature herself. Relegating his books to a secondary plane, ridding himself entirely of the allegory and the dream, he looked face to face at the spectacle of men and set himself to reproduce it directly. He made himself the painter of life.

It is well known how dry, morose, and bitter such reproduction of reality can be. It may breed disgust with life and men.

Chaucer, without flattering his model, placed it in an atmosphere which is good to breathe. No one can read him and not be glad to be in the world. Whoever enters through the door he opens feels a healthy air blow on him from all sides. This is partly because Chaucer writes in a dialect still new, uses words which he was the first to put to real literary use. The language breathes a freshness, as when earth is turned in April, such vernal youth as it could never have at another time. Usually this novelty of language coincides with crudity of thought and puerility of art. But Chaucer, who begins English poetry, ends the Middle Ages. It happened that he

native language, he often gives back to it the grace of novelty by the artlessness of his expression. In his highly skilled verses, English words, frozen by a long winter of waiting, first gave forth their fragrance.

To this advantage, due to exceptional circumstances,

hem the wide sym-

To this especially

iling light which is

shed on it. For some of his fellow-men he feels affection or respect; about all the others he has so much curiosity that they interest him. No one is excluded. He is not easily repelled. He loves the world's variety, is grateful to defects for their difference from virtues. He looks at himself without

it is easiest to have a sense of comradeship.

satire and is supported by self-confidence and by the energy of desires, hopes, loves, and hates; a weakening also of the imagination which transforms and magnifies reality, projecting it on to another more or less arbitrarily chosen plane, and which produces epical, romantic, or allegorical poems. In *The Canterbury Tales* the element of the poet's personality has been subdued, superseded by pleasure in observing and understanding. Hitherto this degree of peaceful, impartial spectatorship had never been reached by poets. More noble and more essentially poetic works had indeed been written: we have but to name two with different claims to greatness, the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Divina Commedia*. Some of the line of French song-makers, stretching from the twelfth-century romancers to Rutebeuf, and past him to reach its apotheosis, a hundred years after Chaucer, in Villon, were more exquisite than the English poet and sounded more thrilling notes than he, nor did he ever attain to the refinements of feeling and language which Petrarch put into his sonnets. But where, before *The Canterbury Tales*, can we find a poem of which the first object is to show men, neither exalted nor demeaned, to display the truthful spectacle of life at its average? Chaucer sees what is and paints it as he sees it. He effaces himself in order to look at it better.

He is the pioneer of that group of spectators who regard with amused indulgence, without seeking to redip it in dye of one colour, the warp and woof of variously coloured threads which is the chequered stuff of a society. Doubtless he has judged certain colours to be more beautiful than the others, but it is on the contrasts they afford that he has founded both his philosophy of life and the laws of his art.

CHAPTER III

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—FROM THE DEATH OF CHAUCER TO THE RENASCENCE (1400–1516)

1. *Chaucer's Imitators and Disciples in England.*—England took two centuries to produce a poet worthy to rank with Chaucer. Nothing better proves his genius than the power-

which he rose above his contemporaries Most of them barely reach the plane of Gower. Criticism in the fifteenth and even

had become entirely mute, Chaucer's line, badly read and transcribed, and later badly printed, seemed to be variable and irregular, to contain a differing number of syllables and irregularly distributed accents. His successors, whose ear was imperfect, were not offended by this lack of rhythm, but felt that it authorized them to licence in their own verse-making. The English verse-form was thrown off its balance and definitely recovered a sure rhythm only with Spenser.

satire and is supported by self-confidence and by the energy of desires, hopes, loves, and hates; a weakening also of the imagination which transforms and magnifies reality, projecting it on to another more or less arbitrarily chosen plane, and which produces epical, romantic, or allegorical poems. In *The Canterbury Tales* the element of the poet's personality has been subdued, superseded by pleasure in observing and understanding. Hitherto this degree of peaceful, impartial spectatorship had never been reached by poets. More noble and more essentially poetic works had indeed been written: we have but to name two with different claims to greatness, the *Chanson de Roland* and the *Divina Commedia*. Some of the line of French song-makers, stretching from the twelfth-century romancers to Rutebeuf, and past him to reach its apotheosis, a hundred years after Chaucer, in Villon, were more exquisite than the English poet and sounded more thrilling notes than he, nor did he ever attain to the refinements of feeling and language which Petrarch put into his sonnets. But where, before *The Canterbury Tales*, can we find a poem of which the first object is to show men, neither exalted nor demeaned, to display the truthful spectacle of life at its average? Chaucer sees what is and paints it as he sees it. He effaces himself in order to look at it better.

He is the pioneer of that group of spectators who regard with amused indulgence, without seeking to redip it in dye of one colour, the warp and woof of variously coloured threads which is the chequered stuff of a society. Doubtless he has judged certain colours to be more beautiful than the others, but it is on the contrasts they afford that he has founded both his philosophy of life and the laws of his art.

CHAPTER III

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—FROM THE DEATH OF CHAUCER TO THE RENASCENCE (1400–1516)

1. *Chaucer's Imitators and Disciples in England.*—England took two centuries to produce a poet worthy to rank with [illegible]

which he rose above his contemporaries. Most of them barely reach the plane of Gower. Criticism in the fifteenth and even [illegible]

inherited of literature. Several causes of this destitution may be discovered, but none which is satisfying save the fact that no writer of genius was born during these long years. The only excuse for the poverty applies to poetry alone. It is [illegible]

transcribed, and later badly printed, seemed to be variable and irregular, to contain a differing number of syllables and irregularly distributed accents. His successors, whose ear [illegible] rhythm, but

n verse-

balance

›enser.

This cause of decline was one which a harmonious poet [illegible]

of the Wars of the Roses (1454–83) might, for instance, be exaggerated, although this terrible civil conflict covered only a fourth of the vast desert space of time. Before this war, England under Henry V experienced a time of military glory which recalled and exceeded the victories of Edward III, and the finest works of the fourteenth century had appeared during the deplorable and humiliating reign of Richard II. But it came to pass that neither triumphs nor disasters could inspire literature. Miserly Nature created only imitators and reiterators of outworn themes. The sense of the beautiful seems to have died with the sense of life and of reality. Contact with the Continent, once so fruitful, could not revive the flagging literary impulse. Contact hardly existed except with France, herself disabled. Italy, which Chaucer had revealed, remained forgotten for a whole century.

England suffered not only checked progress, but also retrogression. Literature resumed its course as though *The Canterbury Tales* had never been written. The decline was immediate. Its signs appeared even in those who knew Chaucer, were near him and called him master, in Occleve and Lydgate.

Both were aware of his superiority. It is touching to see how Occleve represents himself as the stupid scholar of an excellent master:

> My derë maister—God his soulë quyte—
> And fader, Chaucer, fayne wold have me taught,
> But I was dulle, and lerned lyte or naught.

Occleve, dull indeed, saw in Chaucer only an all-wise philosopher, a pious poet, almost a saint. Chaucer's humour escaped him. Lydgate is more discriminating, for while he agrees with Occleve that no poet was left 'that worthy was his ynkehorne for to holde,' he was conscious of Chaucer's wit, and shows his indulgence, not unmixed with scepticism, for verses submitted to him by his youthful disciples. But neither Lydgate nor Occleve was capable of continuing Chaucer's work.

Thomas Occleve[1] (1370?–1454?) is the author of a *Letter of Cupid* long ascribed to Chaucer. It is a translation of the *Epistre du Dieu d'amours* of Christine de Pisan, which was a reply to Jean de Meung's sarcasms against women. It recalls *The Legende of Goode Women* in theme, but it substitutes reasonings for imagination, humour, and life.

In his *La Male Règle de T. Occleve*, which is a sort of confession, the poet informs us that he led a debauched youth, and

[1] *Regement of Princes*, ed. Furnivall (E.E.T.S. extra series, lxxii); *Minor Poems*, ed. Furnivall and Gollancz (ibid., lxi and lxxiii).

in

14
H
the Latin work of the same name which the Roman Aegidius
ote for Philip the Fair. Dissertations, historical samples,
d tales are used to inculcate the lessons. The whole is
ar, fluent, and sufficiently correctly versified, but the in-
lectual and artistic weakness is reminiscent rather of the
lactic Gower than of Chaucer.

John Lydgate[1] (1373?–1450?) has the distinction of being
e most
all the

aucer, in *Il Filostrato* and *Troylus and Criseyde*, had ex-
acted the dramatic essence. He has forgotten that Chaucer
ok the best of his *Falls of Princes* for his 'Monk's Tale,'

dgate's flow of words.

With Lydgate decomposition overtook English verse. He
mits that he 'toke none hede nouther of shorte nor longe,'

Much read and much admired by his contemporaries, who were grateful to him for telling so many stories, and telling them with a certain briskness, Lydgate has been a long time undisturbed except by courageous specialists. The small number of his verses which are still read are those extracted, as in an anthology, by Warton from his *Lyf of Our Lady*, or a few short pieces, religious and secular, a few fables, and, especially, *London Lickpenny*, which hymns with some liveliness the griefs of a countryman suing for justice in London. Unfortunately, Lydgate's authorship of this, the most popular of the poems ascribed to him, is uncertain.

Here and there, especially in the most Chaucerian of his poems, *The Complaint of the Black Knight*, there are pleasant descriptions, but in spite of them we ask whether this Benedictine ever had time to lift his eyes from his books and papers and look at nature. It is certainly from books that he seems to have taken most of his verses which speak of nature.

Much more attractive than the works of Occleve and Lydgate are certain short poems of which the authors are unknown or uncertainly known, and which were long attributed to Chaucer, so that they are included in many editions of his works.[1] A study of their versification and language has, however, proved that they belong to the fifteenth, a few of them even to the sixteenth, century.

A translation of Alain Chartier's *Belle Dame sans Merci*, made by Sir Richard Ros about 1450, is negligible. It dilutes the French octosyllabic lines into the heroic metre, filling them out with expletives and padding, and the result has no merit but correctness of rhythm. *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale* (1403), now restored to Sir Thomas Clanvowe, who knew Chaucer, is, however, an agreeable poem, gracefully relating an argument between the two birds. Its rhythm is light and rapid, and its well-turned and pure language recalls both the *Parlement of Foules* and the prologue to *The Legende of Goode Women*. It is true that the charm of these three hundred lines is in the detail, for the conception—the debate between love and chastened experience—is not new. It goes back to the thirteenth-century debate between the Owl and the Nightingale.

The prologue of *The Legende of Goode Women* also inspired a charming allegory, *The Flower and the Leaf*, which was modernized by Dryden, who took it for Chaucer's. But

[1] In the seventh volume of Skeat's edition of Chaucer (Oxford, 1897).

...y are now admitted to be the probable work of an unl... not write these disjointed verse
lady of the middle fifteenth century. The author repro
the debate between the flower and the leaf to which Ch
made only passing allusion.

The Leaf symbolizes work and the serious and
the Flower frivolous leisure ...
regard the moral ...
opening
restrainec ...
light and ...

... sleep resorts one spring day ... the oak-wood to which ... there are pretty effect ... and ladies and knights of the Leaf, dazzling in their pearls a... ornaments or clad in gilded armour, and all crowned wi... laurel chaplets, who seat themselves beneath an oak. Fro... another side there enter an equally sumptuous company ... knights and ladies wearing flowery chaplets, who engage in ... merry dance. It is all artificial, but the colour and brillianc... are delightful. A storm supervenes, and the followers of th... Flower are drenched, their adornments spoilt. The queen ... gives them shelter and restores their beauty, and then all disappear.

This poem, like the one noticed before it, marks if not an advance on Chaucer's work, yet a difference from it. It is less substantial, real, and humorous, but it has some added lightness, agility, and airiness, and a new dewy quality. Although the fiction of a dream has been abandoned, the poem is more purely dreamy than its predecessors. This is, assuredly, the most exquisite product of the fifteenth century.

The Court of Love is a less freshly coloured poem, but one which is more mischievously witty, shows greater power of characterization, and has a surer rhythm. It is the one of these poems which might best be claimed for Chaucer, had it not the 'gilded' style which hints at *rhetoriqueurs*. It is, in point of fact, the furthest removed from him in date, recent criticism having ascribed it to the first half of the sixteenth century. The author, who calls himself 'Philogenet, of Cambridge Clerk,' loses his way in the palace of Cytherea, where Admetus and Alcestis are vice-regents. Philabone, a lady of the court, informs him of the rules of the place, and shows him the persons who have obeyed or broken the laws of love. Among the latter are such as have deliberately refused to love and are now tormented by regrets. The poet enters the service of

the fair Lady Rosial, who at first treats him harshly, but becomes gracious at the entreaty of Pity. The poem is concluded by a choir of birds, of whom each one intones a beautiful hymn of the Church.

Were this poem not too imitative, and did not 'Philogenet' rather preserve acquired qualities than add to them or transform them, the fifteen hundred lines of this *Court of Love* would redeem the sterility of this impoverished time.

To imitate was then the rule. Langland's imitators matched Chaucer's. As early as the extreme end of the fourteenth century, an unknown author wrote *The Crede of Piers Plowman*,[1] a vigorous satire against friars of all orders. At an unknown date 'The Ploughman's Tale,'[2] which Chaucer had not time to write, was annexed to *The Canterbury Tales*, serving as a vehicle for the grievances of some Lollard. There is a whole series of fairly mediocre poems, alliterative or other, which are evidence of the continued popularity, well into the sixteenth century, of the great fourteenth-century satire.

They occur both before and after the Wars of the Roses. When, after this long period of sanguinary civil conflict which suspended all literary activity, poetry reappears in the reign of the first Tudor sovereign, Henry VII, its languor and weariness and its unrhythmic verse are strangely reminiscent of Occleve and Langland. Yet, when the nausea produced by the repetition of so many old characteristics and old faults has been overcome, it is possible to discern in it vague signs of the coming Renascence.

The mediocre poet Stephen Hawes[3] (1475–1530) illustrates this point. He is yet another of the allegorists, but, while he is too much an echo of the past, he also feebly heralds Spenser. When the Wars of the Roses destroyed almost the whole of English chivalry, they relegated the old chivalrous poetry to a dreamlike past. The attempts to revive it which were made at court did no more than reconstruct an empty show, for the soul of this poetry had gone. It had become imaginative material, almost as unreal as allegorical scenes and personages. In compensation, however, chivalry had acquired the prestige which belongs to the remote, and the melancholy which attaches to regret, both elements of romanticism. It is only this vaguely romantic atmosphere which gives some interest

[1] Inserted in W. Skeat's edition of *Piers Plowman* (Oxford, 1906).
[2] In vol. vii of W. Skeat's edition of Chaucer (Oxford, 1897).
[3] *The Example of Vertue*, 1st ed. 1510 (?). Modernized version in Arber's *Dunbar Anthology*. *The Pastime of Pleasure*, ed. Mead, E.E.T.S., clxxiii (1928).

the past. He writes allegories according to the formula of the *Roman de la Rose*, and, like Spenser, complicates it

virtue. In his *Example of Vertue* (1503–4), he relates the allegory of a youth led by Discretion or Reason who finally marries fair Purity, the daughter of the King of Love. So

th

re:

th.

Gr

His aim in it is to exemplify a transcendent education, to show by what degrees of study and prowess perfection can be reached.

Graunde Amoure, the hero of the poem who tells his own

Quai

Clar

Pucel, marries her, grows old, and dies. Time writes his epitaph in the only lines of Hawes which still live in men's memory:

> For though the daye be never so long,
> At last the belle ringeth to evensong.

In general Hawes's style, sometimes aggrandized by Latinized words, sometimes entangled by awkward constructions, is among the worst known to English poetry. Never did poetry in English sink to lower depths of the prosaic than when Lady Grammar explained the nature of a noun to her pupil. The

verses on the garden of Greek roots and on cooking recipes are much better than these.

Barclay and Skelton, the last two writers of verse who are in the medieval tradition, at least show some novelty of subject or manner.

Alexander Barclay [1] (1474–1552), a Dominican, careful of doctrine, morals, and orthodoxy, and a good Latinist, is hardly more than a translator, yet a free translator who adds matter of his own to his original. He is also the first of his nation to have come across a subject of German origin. His *Ship of Fools* is a translation made in 1509 from the Strasbourg poet Sebastian Brant, not directly but through the medium of a Latin and a French translation. This fiction of a ship in which all fools are invited to embark, so that the author is able to review every kind of folly and insanity provided by mankind, had a great success in England, as on the Continent. Barclay did not miss his opportunity of adding some peculiarly English types to the crew.

He was also the first to introduce the eclogue to his fellow-countrymen. In his youth he had written five eclogues, which he published in 1514, two of them imitations of Mantuanus, who was to be one of the classic Latin authors of the Renascence. They have nothing of the idyll, but are moral satires, discussions between a townsman and a countryman, between a poor poet and a rich miser, an exposition of the miseries of a courtier's life.

Barclay chose his models well, and he has the merits of sincerity of speech and a realism sometimes racy, but his style lacks ductility, his language is rude, and his verse suffers from the general lack of rhythm.

John Skelton (1460?–1529) [2] is a fantastic personage, hard to classify or define. As a learned humanist who won praise from Erasmus, an Oxford laureate famous for his Latin verses and known as a grammarian, he belongs to the Renascence. He is very well acquainted with ancient poets and mindful of the mythology of antiquity. His occupations were serious, for he was tutor to the future Henry VIII and rector of Diss in Norfolk. But he writes verses like a buffoon, in many

[1] *The Ship of Fools*, ed. T. H. Jamieson, 2 vols. (1874); *Certain Eclogues of Alexander Barclay*, and *The Mirror of Good Manners* (Spenser Society, 1885); C. H. Herford, *Studies in the Literary Relations of England and Germany in the Sixteenth Century* (1886); *The English Versions of The Ship of Fools*, by A. Pompen (New York, 1925).

[2] *The Poetical Works of John Skelton*, ed. Dyce, 2 vols. (1843).

ects like a man behind his times. He is faithful to satirical
gory, and sets fine order and classic nobility and elegance
naught. He found heroic verse debased, and, instead of
mpting to reform it, most often abandoned it in favour of
ort irregular line and rhymes multiplied until a dozen of
n sometimes follow each other. His verses might have
improvised by some untiring tavern poet. He deliber-
y turns his back on beauty, is fully aware of what he is
ut, and acknowledges that his only aim is to strike hard
straight:

> Though my rime be ragged,
> Tatter'd and jagged,
> Rudely raine-beaten,
> Rusty and moth-eaten;
> If ye take wel therewith,
> It hath in it some pith.

he pith is mostly satire. In this age of dull repetitions, lton pleases because he is brutal and coarse. No one handled prelates more roughly, not even the Protestants ong whom he is not numbered. Of his numerous poems, w of which are lost, the most interesting are *The Bowge of*

[illegible]

tery, Suspecte or Suspicion, Disdain, and Dissimulation. y conspire against him, and he is about to throw himself the sea in order to escape them, when he awakes—all has a dream. How familiar is every one of these allegorical res! Yet never, perhaps, have they been as living and as y as in this poem. Exceptionally it is written in the za of seven heroic lines called Chaucerian.

olin Clout (1519) is a peasant, another Piers Plowman, like him chastises the vices of the clergy. With dis-rly energy Skelton poses as the mouthpiece of popular th.

he last of these three poems, written in 1522, is a violent ctment of Cardinal Wolsey, the all-powerful minister of ry VIII. It includes a stinging description of the terror hich he was held by the noblest of the kingdom.

lthough Skelton's habitual tone is satirical, and he uses placently the coarsest insults and worst indecencies, he

yet showed himself capable, on occasion, of feeling and even of a certain grace, as in his *Boke of Philipp Sparowe* (1503–7), an elegy on the death of a sparrow who belonged to fair Jane Scroupe. It echoes the little poem of Catullus, with the difference that the Latin poet's eighteen lines have become 1,382 lines of Skeltonic verse. It is a hotch-potch of reminiscences and buffoonery, alternating with passages full of freshness and charm. There is something of everything in John Skelton, that first rough sketch for Rabelais. Taken all together, however, his poetry represents rather the last stirrings of the dying Middle Ages than the first signs of life of the Renascence.

2. *Scottish Poetry from 1400 to 1516.*—There is pleasure in passing from the English to the Scottish poetry of the fifteenth century. It is not that the matter of poetry had been renewed in Scotland. North as south of the Tweed, the allegorical school was dominant and Chaucer's personal influence reigned. The Scots had, however, kept the artistic sense and a line which had an assured rhythm, and they had a vitality which contrasted happily with English languor. This is the most glorious period of all their old poetry.

The patriotic impulse which had caused Barbour to write his *Bruce* in the previous century had almost ceased to be felt. The only poem which matches *Bruce* is *Wallace*,[1] written about 1461 by the minstrel called Blind Harry. He differed from Barbour, who related the comparatively recent exploits of the Bruce, for he went back to an earlier hero whose date was a hundred and fifty years before his own. The fabulous element looms much larger in *Wallace* than in *Bruce*. Wallace's exploits are magnified and multiplied. But the two poems tell their tale with the same naked simplicity. Barbour's prosaic quality is even intensified in Blind Harry, who is platitudinous. He is devoid of poetry, merely amasses detail, and his substitution of decasyllabic couplets for Barbour's eight-syllable verses only protracts the line awkwardly and increases its monotony.

This poem is isolated, and it heightens, by contrast, the ornate, even exaggeratedly brilliant, character of other Scottish verse in this century.

The first in date of the poets of Scotland who were influenced by Chaucer is King James I (1394–1436). Doubts have been thrown on his literary claims, but they have not seriously shaken the beautiful and touching tradition that *The*

[1] Ed. by J. Moir for the Scottish Text Society, 1884–9.

when jestingly and in heroic tones he sang the adventures of the fox, but they are copious, crowded with detail and with notes of customs or characteristics, abundantly picturesque, much more extensive than those of La Fontaine. What life and go there is in the most celebrated of them, which is imitated from Horace, *The Uplandis Mous and the Burges Mous*! How amusing the contrast between the rural mouse in her 'sillie scheill' (poor hut),

Withouten fyre or candill birnand bricht,

and her sister, the burgess mouse, whose dwelling is a larder in a rich man's house, and who says to the other:

My Gude Fryday is better nor your Pace! [1]

All this is told with a swing and with fine humour, in the seven-lined Chaucerian stanza, and with sympathy for the animals brought on the scene. Happily the moral is placed by itself, so that nothing spoils or hinders the pleasure of the story.

Other qualities are revealed in Henryson's other short poems. *Orpheus and Eurydice*, founded on Boethius, has a pathetic lyricism, and *Robene and Makyne*, which is half-way between a *pastourelle* and a pastoral, is ingeniously constructed. Makyne has vainly sighed for Robene for 'yeris two or thre,' but he cares nothing for her, thinks only of his sheep, and repels her harshly. Hardly has she left him when he regrets her, and it is then his turn to beg and implore. But she reminds him of his hardness, laughs at his sighs, and bids him adieu:

Makyne went hame blythe aneweche [2]
  Attour the holtis hair.[3]
Robene murnit, and Makyne lewche;[4]
  Scho sang, he sichit sair:[5]
And so left him bayth wo and wreuch,
  In dolour and in cair,
Kepand his hird under a huche[6]
  Among the holtis hair.

The *estrif* or *disputoison* is recalled, save for the fresh country air that blows through the poem. Of all the Scottish poets of this time, Henryson has most rustic realism and savours most of the soil.

The one of this remarkable group who is justly reputed the

[1] Easter. [2] Enough. [3] Over the grey hills.
[4] Laughed. [5] Sighed sore. [6] Cliff.

greatest is, however, William Dunbar (1460?–1520?).[1] This churchman, first in Franciscan habit, then unfrocked, at one time a wandering preacher, at others sent by James IV on embassies to London and Paris, became in some sort the poet laureate of Scotland. Some hundred of his poems are extant. Nearly all of them are short, but their variety of subject and versification is surprising. Dunbar's prolificity has nothing in common with the flat long-windedness of a Lydgate. He is an artist, even, in some respects, a great artist. It is true that there is nothing new in his thought or feeling. He does not abandon the medieval frames; both his allegories and his satires keep to the traditional grooves. Nor does he ever, like Villon whose verses he knew, thrill with a personal and vibratingly emotional note. He is without Chaucer's and Henryson's fine gifts of observation. But he has to a rare legree—one never reached before him and seldom since—rtuosity of style and versification. No one hitherto had ut so much colour in pictures; no one, above all, had given ich a swing to lines and stanza. It matters little that Dunbar has not much to say which touches the heart or the mind. He dazzles the eyes and ravishes the ears.

It is brilliancy which is especially remarkable in his official allegories, for instance *The Thrissil and the Rois*[2] in which he symbolizes the marriage in 1503 of James IV to Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII, that union of Scotland and England. Dunbar has recourse to the convention of a vision during sleep, but what a wealth of coloured words he uses, how rapidly the allegories, usually so slow, unfold themselves in his hands! His flamboyant style can doubtless be criticized, yet artifice is in place in such occasional verse. Poetry of this kind, in which conventionalized and highly coloured heraldic figures are substituted for real beings—the lion, the eagle, the thistle, the rose—is surely suited to the celebration of a marriage between two countries. The very violences of the style are those of an artist whose effects are new, as when he speaks of birds singing

Amang the tendir odouris reid and quhyt

He goes farther in his *Golden Targe*, in which he uses [illegible]remittingly a nine-line stanza having two rhymes. Nearly [illegible] in this allegory shows an advance on the *Roman de la R*[illegible]

[1] Works ed. by W. M. Mackenzie (1932). See R. A. Taylor [illegible] and his Period (1931); C. Steinberger, *Étude sur William Dunbar* [illegible]

[2] See Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. III.

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the full stream of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, marking the transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir David Lyndsay, who poetically was even more attached than he to the past. Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which coincided with the Reformation, and he definitely belongs to the sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have reviewed constitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poetry of the fifteenth century. This is far from being all the poetry of the period. There were also anonymous popular verses, both ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot be localized or dated with any precision. They cannot all be claimed for the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must have had an earlier beginning and certainly were produced until a later time; but the impulse to make them seems to have been particularly active in this century, to which, moreover, the oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them best. But they must be in no way identified with the courtly ballade, which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned and artificial. The two words doubtless share a derivation from *baller*, to dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in the poetry which accompanied dancing and implied musical declamation with a collective refrain. But hardly more than the traces of this prototype remain. When the popular ballad of Great Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no more of its primary form than warrants a presumption, more complete than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation between the poet and his audience. It has even been supposed that a ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of a group of people. Reflection shows, however, that this theory has little plausibility. There could be agreement for the purposes of poetry among a number of people only in the sharing of a passion, and the work of an artist or several successive artists has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It was artists, however primitive, who interpreted the multitude. Once a ballad existed, the public did in some sort collaborate in its

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (1882–98), critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittredge (Boston, 1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (Boston, 1894); D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York, 1921).

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the full stream of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, marking the transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir David Lyndsay, who poetically was even more attached than he to the past. Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which coincided with the Reformation, and he definitely belongs to the sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have reviewed constitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poetry of the fifteenth century. This is far from being all the poetry of the period. There were also anonymous popular verses, both ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot be localized or dated with any precision. They cannot all be claimed for the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must have had an earlier beginning and certainly were produced until a later time; but the impulse to make them seems to have been particularly active in this century, to which, moreover, the oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them best. But they must be in no way identified with the courtly ballade, which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned and artificial. The two words doubtless share a derivation from *baller*, to dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in the poetry which accompanied dancing and implied musical declamation with a collective refrain. But hardly more than the traces of this prototype remain. When the popular ballad of Great Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no more of its primary form than warrants a presumption, more complete than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation between the poet and his audience. It has even been supposed that a ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of a group of people. Reflection shows, however, that this theory has little plausibility. There could be agreement for the purposes of poetry among a number of people only in the sharing of a passion, and the work of an artist or several successive artists has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It was artists, however primitive, who interpreted the multitude. Once a ballad existed, the public did in some sort collaborate in its

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (1882–98), critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittredge (Boston, 1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (Boston, 1894); D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York, 1921).

it lost, little by little, its imprint; its salient curves were

became romantic and acquired the prestige of the remote

hear them as they were originally. At some moment of its life, already, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public knowledge, and the subtle effect of the human emotions excited while it has been endlessly repeated may indeed have given it the value of a collective work.

It may be said that this is equally true of the old songs

but the ballads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated to his exploits do not go back further than the sixteenth century. While the existence of numerous ballads in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there are only two which can certainly be placed before the Renascence: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid*

Chevy Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads. In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the full stream of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, marking the transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir David Lyndsay, who poetically was even more attached than he to the past. Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which coincided with the Reformation, and he definitely belongs to the sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have reviewed constitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poetry of the fifteenth century. This is far from being all the poetry of the period. There were also anonymous popular verses, both ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot be localized or dated with any precision. They cannot all be claimed for the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must have had an earlier beginning and certainly were produced until a later time; but the impulse to make them seems to have been particularly active in this century, to which, moreover, the oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them best. But they must be in no way identified with the courtly ballade, which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned and artificial. The two words doubtless share a derivation from *baller*, to dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in the poetry which accompanied dancing and implied musical declamation with a collective refrain. But hardly more than the traces of this prototype remain. When the popular ballad of Great Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no more of its primary form than warrants a presumption, more complete than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation between the poet and his audience. It has even been supposed that a ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of a group of people. Reflection shows, however, that this theory has little plausibility. There could be agreement for the purposes of poetry among a number of people only in the sharing of a passion, and the work of an artist or several successive artists has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It was artists, however primitive, who interpreted the multitude. Once a ballad existed, the public did in some sort collaborate in its

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (1882–98), critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittredge (Boston, 1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (Boston, 1894); D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York, 1921).

differ from other poems because we never, or hardly ever, hear them as they were originally. At some moment of its life, already, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public knowledge, and the subtle effect of the human emotions excited while it has been endlessly repeated may indeed have given it the value of a collective work.

It may be said that this is equally true of the old songs which were not written down for many years. But a ballad is not a song. Usually it holds a story; it is the fragment of an epic; sometimes it is plainly the summary of old chivalrous poems of which only the essence has been kept for the pur-

but the ballads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated to *his exploits do not go back further than the sixteenth* century. While the existence of numerous ballads in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there are only two which can certainly be placed before the Renascence: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid*

Chevy Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads. In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the full stream of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, marking the transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir David Lyndsay, who poetically was even more attached than he to the past. Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which coincided with the Reformation, and he definitely belongs to the sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have reviewed constitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poetry of the fifteenth century. This is far from being all the poetry of the period. There were also anonymous popular verses, both ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot be localized or dated with any precision. They cannot all be claimed for the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must have had an earlier beginning and certainly were produced until a later time; but the impulse to make them seems to have been particularly active in this century, to which, moreover, the oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them best. But they must be in no way identified with the courtly ballade, which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned and artificial. The two words doubtless share a derivation from *baller*, to dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in the poetry which accompanied dancing and implied musical declamation with a collective refrain. But hardly more than the traces of this prototype remain. When the popular ballad of Great Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no more of its primary form than warrants a presumption, more complete than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation between the poet and his audience. It has even been supposed that a ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of a group of people. Reflection shows, however, that this theory has little plausibility. There could be agreement for the purposes of poetry among a number of people only in the sharing of a passion, and the work of an artist or several successive artists has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It was artists, however primitive, who interpreted the multitude. Once a ballad existed, the public did in some sort collaborate in its

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (1882–98), critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittredge (Boston, 1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (Boston, 1894); D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York, 1921).

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the full stre of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, marking transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir David Ly say, who poetically was even more attached than he to the pa Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which coinci with the Reformation, and he definitely belongs to sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have reviewed c stitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poetry of fifteenth century. This is far from being all the poetry of period. There were also anonymous popular verses, b ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot be locali or dated with any precision. They cannot all be claimed the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must have had earlier beginning and certainly were produced until a la time; but the impulse to make them seems to have b particularly active in this century, to which, moreover, oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them best. they must be in no way identified with the courtly balla which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned and artific The two words doubtless share a derivation from *baller*, dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in the poe which accompanied dancing and implied musical declamat with a collective refrain. But hardly more than the tra of this prototype remain. When the popular ballad of Gr Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no more of primary form than warrants a presumption, more comp than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation between poet and his audience. It has even been supposed tha ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of a grou people. Reflection shows, however, that this theory has li plausibility. There could be agreement for the purpose poetry among a number of people only in the sharing passion, and the work of an artist or several successive art has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It was arti however primitive, who interpreted the multitude. Onc ballad existed, the public did in some sort collaborate in

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. (1882- critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittredge (Bo 1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (Boston, 18 D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 (1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York, 1921).

ttle by little, its imprint; its salient curves were

vhich gives ballads their special character. They m other poems because we never, or hardly ever, n as they were originally. At some moment of its dy, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public c, and the subtle effect of the human emotions vhile it has been endlessly repeated may indeed n it the value of a collective work.

be said that this is equally true of the old songs re not written down for many years. But a ballad ong. Usually it holds a story: it is the fragment of ometimes it is plainly the summary of old chivalrous which only the essence has been kept for the pur- short recitation and to make a rapid impression on inds. Or else the ballad relates for a district a r ill-omened incident which is known to all and has eroes, so that, however allusively the poet expresses he is sure of being understood even by the most

llad exists everywhere in Europe, but is most copious in the outlying regions, in Spain in the south and in via in the north. Great Britain, insular and isolated, many ballads, especially on the Border, the scene in

allads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated ploits do not go back further than the sixteenth While the existence of numerous ballads in the h and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there two which can certainly be placed before the ce: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid*

Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii

making, for memory altered, modified, or suppressed, and new circumstances suggested opportune additions. Oral tradition changed the form of the poem. Like money in circulation, it lost, little by little, its imprint; its salient curves were [illegible]

[illegible]

differ from other poems because we never, or hardly ever, hear them as they were originally. At some moment of its life, already, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public knowledge, and the subtle effect of the human emotions excited while it has been endlessly repeated may indeed have given it the value of a collective work.

It may be said that this is equally true of the old songs which were not written down for many years. But a ballad is not a song. Usually it holds a story: it is the fragment of an epic; sometimes it is plainly the summary of old chivalrous poems of which only the essence has been kept for the purposes of a short recitation and to make a rapid impression on simple minds. Or else the ballad relates for a district a glorious or ill-omened incident which is known to all and has familiar heroes, so that, however allusively the poet expresses himself, he is sure of being understood even by the most ignorant.

[illegible]

old days of so many sanguinary encounters of Scots and English.

We have spoken of the popular rhymes, dating from the fourteenth century, on Robin Hood, bowman and outlaw, but the ballads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated to his exploits do not go back further than the sixteenth century. While the existence of numerous ballads in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there are only two which can certainly be placed before the Renascence: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid.*

Chevy Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii.

his earlier allegories, that Douglas was not in the f
of the Renascence. He stood on its brink, ma
transition from one age to another.

We have still to speak of his countryman Sir Da
say, who poetically was even more attached than he t
Lyndsay's life was, however, a long battle which
with the Reformation, and he definitely belon
sixteenth century.

3. *The Old Ballads.*[1]—The works we have revi
stitute, in Scotland as in England, the official poe
fifteenth century. This is far from being all the po
period. There were also anonymous popular ve
ruder and more truly alive, which often cannot b
or dated with any precision. They cannot all be c
the fifteenth century, for poems of the sort must h
earlier beginning and certainly were produced un
time; but the impulse to make them seems to
particularly active in this century, to which, mo
oldest extant specimens belong.

The word 'ballad,' vague as it is, denotes them
they must be in no way identified with the court
which was fixed in form and peculiarly learned an
The two words doubtless share a derivation from
dance, and the ballad and ballade both originated in
which accompanied dancing and implied musical d
with a collective refrain. But hardly more than
of this prototype remain. When the popular balla
Britain emerges from the shadows it retains no r
primary form than warrants a presumption, more
than for other kinds of poetry, of co-operation be
poet and his audience. It has even been suppo
ballad is the spontaneous and joint composition of
people. Reflection shows, however, that this theor
plausibility. There could be agreement for the p
poetry among a number of people only in the sh
passion, and the work of an artist or several succes
has to be recognized in a ballad of any length. It
however primitive, who interpreted the multitude
ballad existed, the public did in some sort collabo

[1] F. J. Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vo
critical edition; edition in 1 vol. with introduction by G. L. Kittr
1904); F. G. Gummere, *Introduction to Old English Ballads* (B
D. Laing, *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Border*, ed. H
(1895); Louise Pound, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* (New York,

making, for memory altered, modified, or suppressed, and new circumstances suggested opportune additions. Oral tradition changed the form of the poem. Like money in circulation, it lost, little by little, its imprint; its salient curves were [illegible]

making which gives ballads their special character. They differ from other poems because we never, or hardly ever, hear them as they were originally. At some moment of its life, already, it may be, a long one, a ballad becomes public knowledge, and the subtle effect of the human emotions excited while it has been endlessly repeated may indeed have given it the value of a collective work.

It may be said that this is equally true of the old songs which were not written down for many years. But a ballad is not a song. Usually it holds a story: it is the fragment of an epic; sometimes it is plainly the summary of old chivalrous poems of which only the essence has been kept for the purposes of a short recitation and to make a rapid impression on simple minds. Or else the ballad relates for a district a glorious or ill-omened incident which is known to all and has familiar heroes, so that, however allusively the poet expresses himself, he is sure of being understood even by the most ignorant.

[illegible]

but the ballads, a whole cycle of them, which are consecrated to his exploits do not go back further than the sixteenth century. While the existence of numerous ballads in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be conjectured, there are only two which can certainly be placed before the Renascence: *Chevy Chase* and *The Nut-brown Maid*

Chevy Chase[1] is the oldest and the finest of the epical ballads. In theme and sentiment it is akin to *Roland* or

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii

Byrhtnoth. It is at least half-historical, its subject the struggle between Percy of Northumberland and the Douglas of Scotland at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The manners it reveals are at once violent and chivalrous, a love of battle combining with generosity to enemies. But that which in *Byrhtnoth* has an epic swing is here lyrical. This ballad is a sung recitation, a sort of melopoeia. Already it has the metre which was to be pre-eminently that of the ballads, the seven-accented line in two divisions (4+3) and the rhymes in couples. The division is so fixed that the couplet can be considered as a quatrain:

> The Persé owt off Northombarlonde
> An avowe to God mayd he
> That he wold hunt in the mountayns
> Off Chyviat within days three.

The division often leads to the rhyming of the first and third sections, giving quatrains with cross-rhymes (*abab*). The tendency to regularize rhythm also has the effect in the later ballads of making the lines syllabic, that is to say alternately of eight and six syllables. In *Chevy Chase* the verse is primitive in its rudeness and has the minimum of ornament.

There is in this ballad a manifest basis of realism. It tells an incident all too truly characteristic of life on the Border, where there was little distinction between warfare and brigandage. Percy wishes to hunt in enemy country, less for love of the deer than to provoke his adversary. He rejoices greatly when, after the hunt, the Douglas arrives and the battle begins. Yet these wild opponents have the spirit of chivalry: the Douglas, in order to spare 'guiltless men,' proposes to Percy to meet him in single combat. But the ardour of Percy's followers, who would think it shame to leave all the danger to their chief, cannot be restrained, and the fight is general. When the Douglas is slain, Percy, who a minute before had been drunk with battle, gives rein, before the body of his enemy, to artless grief and sincere admiration:

> The Persé leanyde on his brande, and sawe the Duglas de;
> He tooke the dede man be the hande, and sayd, Wo ys me for the!
> To have savyde thy lyffe I would have partyd with my landes for years thre,
> For a better man of hart, nare of hande, was not in all the north countrè.

The minstrel who so vigorously sings the fine sword-play is mindful of the evils to which such violence will give rise:

> The chyld may rue that ys un-borne, it was the more pittè.

Sincere emotion is betrayed by these very contradictions. The poem wins us by the truthfulness of its feeling as of its restrained decoration and its details. Whether or not the details be strictly historical, we follow the vicissitudes of the conflict, the part played by the English bowmen, the tactics of the Douglas when he caused his men to advance in scattered formation, the hand-to-hand struggle.

There is a sort of Homeric impartiality in this war ballad. The Percy and the Douglas show equal heroism, although their virtues are opposed like those of an Achilles and a Hector. The poet's English patriotism is clearly discovered only at the end. When he hears that the Douglas is slain, the king of Scotland is in despair, but Henry IV, learning Percy's death, is undismayed in his pride:

God have merci on his soll, sayd kyng Harry, Good Lord, yf thy will it be!
I have a hondrith captayns in Ynglonde, he sayd, as good as ever was hee:
But Persé, and I brook my lyffe, thy deth well quyte[1] shall be

He then dispatches an army which wins the victory of Humbledon.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of this short literary epic. Its success was not confined to the people, but extended to men of letters and poets. Sir Philip Sidney wrote of it about 1581:

[illegible]

As though to show Sidney's wish, a poet of the first years of [illegible] he *Spectator.* He [illegible] used it as a text [illegible] He loved it as Molière loved the old song of Henry IV of France and for the same qualities—just style and natural feeling. Finally Bishop Percy (1765) inserted the oldest text in his *Reliques,*

[1] Requited.

and *Chevy Chase* was one of the medieval poems which induced Romanticism. Soon the very irregularity of its verses was found to have a special charm, and this rudeness inspired Coleridge to give a new harmony to his *Ancient Mariner* and, above all, to his *Christabel*. It is sincerity of tone, like that of *Chevy Chase*, which, down the ages and among extravagances and artifices, brings back to natural truth the poetry which has left nature too far behind.

Such fine romantic ballads as *Sir Patrick Spens*, *Clerk Saunders* and *Child Waters* cannot be certainly ascribed to the fifteenth century, for the versions of them which have reached us are all of later date. But a poem of a special kind, which encloses the elements of a simple ballad in the framework of a courtly *disputoison*, may be claimed for this century.

A lady is represented as using the story of *The Nut-brown Maid*[1] to free women of the reproach of inconstancy constantly levelled at them by men. The dark maid, who is a baron's daughter, is visited by her lover whom she believes to be a squire of low degree, and who comes to bid her farewell because he has killed a man and must hide in the woods as an outlaw. But neither his picture of a life of pains and peril, nor even his avowal that he has another mistress, can bend her from her will to follow him for love's sake. He has but proved her, as Griselda was proved, and, sure of her heart, he reveals himself as an earl's son who will make her lady of his heritage in Westmorland.

There cannot here be question of a popular composition. Nothing could be more artistic than these thirty six-lined stanzas with their alternating refrains. Each stanza has lines of seven accents, divided in 2+2+3, and a system of multiplied rhymes puts very severe constraint upon the poet. Yet the simplicity of style and sincerity of tone do not at all suffer. While the lady, who may be supposed to be the author, plays the part of the Nut-brown Maid, the other speaker takes that of the outlaw. There is a dialogue, each of them in turn speaking a stanza with its refrain. The dramatic interest and liveliness thus given to the little poem cause its thesis to be forgotten in its story. The unadorned stylistic fabric, which admirably renders emotion, does not lack broad images, such as those in the first answer of the enamoured lady

[1] Text in Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii.

of perspective if it be studied in one country alone. In that great common fatherland which was Christendom in the Middle Ages, nations were, from the spiritual point of view, hardly more than are to-day the provinces of a centralized state. Therefore to relate the history of the Christian drama of England is, in many respects, little more than to repeat what is known of that of France. It is thus possible to deal with the subject allusively and rapidly.

Every one knows that this drama was an offshoot of the liturgy, which, with its solemn staging, lent itself well to dramatic development. The germs of the drama were in the offices of the Church, in the chants alternating between the priest and the congregation or the choir which represented it, the recitative passages, the plastic decoration, the processions, the ritual of movement and gesture. It was in the form of 'tropes,' or declamation in dialogues, that drama made its first appearance. Two tropes of the Easter office, which were declaimed in England in the tenth and eleventh centuries, before as well as after the Norman Conquest, have been preserved, and made it almost certain that, with or without the Conquest, religious drama would have evolved in England as in every Christian country.

First given within the church and declaimed in Latin, these dialogues developed into small dramas when they left the church and were played in the porch and when they exchanged Latin for the vernacular, two conditions essential to the needed liberty. The best-known example of a transitional play of this kind is *Adam*, which was written in French, but by a Norman or Anglo-Norman of the twelfth century, and which seems to have been performed not in France, but in England. Very interesting because of its place at the origin of two great dramatic literatures, it is so also intrinsically. Restrained, even a little bare, but grave in thought, its sentiment just, decided, and precise, and its language vigorous, it has a real value. It comprises three parts—the fall of Adam and Eve, the death of Abel, and a procession of the prophets who announce the coming of the Redeemer. The scene of Eve's temptation by the devil shows a certain refinement and some poetic grace. Almost all and the best characters of the religious drama are to be found in this old Anglo-Norman play.

But is was necessary for this drama to emancipate itself completely from the Church. It had to leave the church

as *aaabab* or *aaabaaab* or *aaaabcccb*, *b* standing for a short two-accented line among others usually of four accents. But while the stanza is learned, the rhythm is, as a rule, unformed and metrical padding abounds. The principal defect is due to the unfitness of such stanzas to render dramatic movement or easy-going dialogue. The difficulty of finding a metre appropriate to drama was the great obstacle to dramatic progress until nearly the end of the sixteenth century. The unknown authors of the miracle plays are not poets enough to animate their awkward stanzas. Yet they are, at moments, capable of pathos, and more frequently there is full-flavoured comedy in their scenes.

As elsewhere, the religious drama had a value due to the simple grandeur of the total conception, and the artlessness of the means used to call up the whole of Scripture before the people is disarming. The poets effaced themselves before their subjects. They had no freedom of invention, hardly of composition, and were debarred from discovering motives for action except within strict limits. Since the stories were known to every one, the principal interest was in the spectacles. Only here and there and accidentally does the author himself intervene, analysing passions or sentiments.

This happens in the play *Abraham and Isaac*,[1] which was written in the fifteenth century and belongs to an unknown cycle. It has one scene of two hundred lines, than which nothing could be more pathetic. It is that which depicts the conflicting sentiments of the father who has the will to obey God, but is stayed by love for his child, and of the son divided between submission to his father and fear of death. Little Isaac trembles before the gleaming sword, thinks of his mother in grief, asks for the fatal stroke yet would avert it. The *Iphigenia* of Euripides has not more feeling, nor Shakespeare's *King John* when little Prince Arthur implores his executioner. We are irresistibly moved to tears; moral emotion and physical suffering are mingled. The only defect of this touching scene is its slowness, which has a slightly monotonous effect. The succeeding scene, in which Isaac, saved from death, expresses his childish joy and tenderly thanks the ram sacrificed in his stead, is very charmingly artless.

It is, however, in comic passages that the English playwrights show most go and originality. Comedy in the Middle

[1] There are two texts: one, ed. L. Toulmin Smith, is printed in *Anglia*, vol. vii (1884), the other, ed. R. Brotanek, in *Anglia*, vol. xxi (1899).

she takes herself off to spin alone in a corner. Her husband and her sons and daughters implore her vainly: she will not budge. But no sooner does Noah tell her to do just as she likes than she changes her mind and comes on board. She is still, however, in a bad temper, and Noah has to beat her soundly before things are in train. From the moment of her beating Mrs. Noah is appeased and becomes a charming travelling-companion, helping to navigate the ark and send forth birds, all her talk good sense and kindliness.

The broad comedy of this character in no way lessens the piety of the play, and occurs amid such artless simplicity that it is hardly discordant. Goodman Noah conversing with the Lord, monologuing as he builds the Ark, describing what he does as he goes along and complaining of his stiff back, and the concluding ingenuous dialogue which suggests the various incidents of the voyage: all this makes a homely, cheerful whole, in which the buffoonery is not out of place.

The same mingling of simple piety and farce goes to make the nativity play, but here the farce is more developed and almost constitutes an independent comedy in rustic northern dialect.

With the honest shepherds, who appear telling the troubles of their life—hard winters, the oppression of gentlemen—or who complain of the cantankerousness of their wives, there mingles a certain Mak, a cunning scamp, almost a precursor of the Shakespearian Autolycus. The action of the farce is that he steals a sheep from the others and conceals it, and that his theft is discovered. The sheep is put in a cradle, and Mak's wife, on her bed, groans as though she were just delivered of a child. When one of the good shepherds wants to give the baby a sixpence, the trick is exposed. And no sooner has Mak been tossed in punishment than the angel begins to sing 'Gloria in Excelsis,' and the good shepherds, led by the star, set out for the Crib, discoursing on the angel's beautiful song and on the prophecies. Before the Crib their demeanour is the same as before the cradle of the sham baby. They are touched by the infant's charm; they bring him simple presents, one a bird, another cherries—at Christmas time!—the third a ball to play at tennis. Their words of adoration alternate with their pity for the frailty and tininess and the poverty of the Divine Child.

It is very remarkable that in these two plays, *Noah* and *The Nativity*, the very brisk and copious comic element does not

have exhausted itself on the construction, which is itself no more than a severe staging of the transcendent message of Christianity.

After the fifteenth century the miracle plays were still performed, but their form had been fixed and was not changed henceforth. The morality, on the other hand, had an active life, and was used by the dramatists of the Renascence and the Reformation as a means to their ends.

5. *Prose in the Fifteenth Century.*[1]—English prose of the fifteenth century amounts to little if the name be reserved for writings which have originality and some artistic value. There was the same reason for inferiority as in the preceding period; Latin still attracted writers whose purpose was not strictly utilitarian or who were more than mere translators. The bold movement of Wyclif and his partisans had, moreover, been checked. The first half of the fifteenth century was a period of narrow orthodoxy in which the cruelly persecuted Lollards were reduced to silence. Only in the second half of this century did a few rare works which deserve notice appear in English prose. It would, however, be wrong to conclude from this dearth that the spread of reading and learning had been arrested. Education made its way in spite of foreign and civil wars and was diffused. The number of persons able to read and write increased and the first epistolary collections were made. The lateness of English as compared to continental prose is principally due to the fact that it was still imitative and contented itself with translations of numerous foreign and especially French books which continued completely to satisfy the reading public. In this century men had not yet abandoned the paths of the Middle Ages. Literary sentiment was still not national, which is to say that there was as yet no artistic ideal.

It was the desire to bring the last Lollards back to orthodoxy which decided the learned Reginald Pecock (1395–1460?) to write in English. This Welshman, who had taken orders and become bishop, first of St. Asaph and then of Chichester, was, as early as 1447, disquieting the clergy by the arguments he used to defend them, and he put the finishing touch to their indignation in 1455 by his *Repression of Overmuch Blaming the Clergy*,[2] in which he defends images, pilgrimages, the

[1] For extracts from prose writers of the fifteenth century see A. W. Pollard, *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse* (1903), and Skeat, *Specimens*, vol. iii.

[2] Ed. C. Babington for Rolls Series, 2 vols. (1860).

When the Lancastrian cause was lost, Fortescue went o to the Yorkists and wrote, this time in English, his li treatise of forty pages on *The Governance of England.* He l stayed in France with Henry VI when that king was a fugit and he takes France as the type of an absolute, Englanc that of a limited, monarchy. This writer affords the f example of national political pride. He admires his c country, as compared with France, for its greater libe and more abundant riches, his patriotism leading him so that he celebrates the outstanding valour of his compat highwaymen. The French, he says, are, like the Scots, cowardly to steal. 'Ther is no man hanged in Scotland in yere to gedur ffor robbery. . . . But the Englysh man is another corage. Ffor yff he be pouere, and see another n havynge rychesse, wich mey be taken ffrom hym be mygl he will not spare to do so.'

The Paston Letters,[1] the correspondence of the Pas family, are interesting rather to the historian than to student of literature. While scholars, clerks, and nol still wrote in Latin, the middle class was taking to Engl The letters have been preserved of three generations of Pastons, a well-to-do Norfolk family, and they give m intimate and curious information about English life fr 1422 to 1509. Passages are not lacking which suggest barbarism of the period, but the picture as a whole is c very modern middle-class society, much engrossed by mo matters, leases and the letting of land, the management property, lawsuits, home comforts, domestic cleanlin We learn what men read in those days and how severely t brought up their children. Dame Agnes inquires if her Clement be working well at the Inns of Court, and begs tutor that otherwise 'he wyll trewly belassch hym, tyl wyll amend, and so ded the last maystr, and the best t ever he had, att Caumbrege.' There is a sure and seri affection between husband and wife, and they work toget to establish the family fortunes. The wife shows gr courage when the house is attacked by a band of enen during her husband's absence.

There is nothing literary in these letters about business, of them utilitarian, and they cannot be said to show that tl writers used the English language easily and fluently. Tl managed to understand each other, nothing more.

[1] Ed. J. Gairdner, 4 vols. (1901).

literature that Caxton came to be impregnated, and to its propagation that he devoted his energies as translator and printer. Bruges was one of the first towns to take advantage of Gutenberg's invention, and Caxton, having been initiated by the printer Colard Mansion, finished an incomplete translation of the *Receuil des Histoires de Troye* by Raoul Lefèvre, chaplain to the Duke of Burgundy, and published it at Bruges in 1474. It was the first printed English book. The second was the translation of another French work, a moral and allegorical treatise on the game of chess.

When more than fifty years old Caxton returned to England, in 1476, and established the first English printing-press near Westminster Abbey. Amid much [illegible] and protected by Earl Rivers and by the [illegible], afterwards Richard III, he worked there until his death in 1491.

What is interesting is his choice of books for printing. He has right neither to the glory of having discovered printing, which belongs to Gutenberg and Schoeffer, nor to the glory of erudition won by the Aldi of Venice and the Étiennes of France, nor even to that of producing beautiful volumes. He was essentially a practical man, on the look-out for books likely to please, and also a man whose personal tastes were determined by his long sojourn on the Continent and by his age. But although his title to represent his nation has been questioned, it is impossible not to be struck by the fact that the library he formed is very like that of the Paston family. It contains the same mixture of poetry, chivalrous romances, moral allegories, and books of devotion.

He was a great admirer of Chaucer and printed *The Canterbury Tales* (1478) and *Troylus and Criseyde*, but he also found room for Lydgate and Gower.

He preferred prose, however, as a medium for the translations of French chivalrous romances which he made or had made—the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, *The Boke of Histories of Jason*, *The Lyf of Charles the Grete*, the *Morte d'Arthur*, *The Foure Sonnes of Aymon*. It was also into prose that he translated *The Historye of Reynart the Foxe* from the Dutch.

Among works of piety issued from his press were the Hours of the Church, a life of Christ, and a translation of *The Golden Legend* which had the largest circulation of all his publications.

Nothing shows the medieval character of his reading and his mind better than the *Aeneid* he published in 1490, which is

translated not from Virgil but from a baroque romance
Middle Ages.

If it be remembered that Caxton's immediate succe
Wynkyn de Worde, Richard Pynson, and the others, di
notably deviate from his lead in their choice of public
up to 1530, it becomes clear that the English Renas
began amid a considerable body of books which were
trated by the medieval spirit. It might even be thoug
nearly complete is the absence of the books properly

still few in number, for popular books written in thei
language.

What is most remarkable, from the literary point of
is the development of English prose for which Caxt
mediocre writer, was responsible. French prose, of
he definitely perceived the qualities, was his ideal.
admired 'the fair language of French, which was in pr
well and compendiously set and written, which meth
I understood the sentence and substance of every m
(*Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*) He himself aimed
like clarity and like ease.

In producing prose renderings of the medieval roman
followed the example of the French of the fifteenth ce
He thus ensured a longer survival and wider popular
these romances, which he made accessible to all men
English, verse had hardly ever embellished them, and,
not been for the minstrels, they would have fallen into ne
Prose secured that the stories they enclosed became k
In more or less shortened form, these romances passed
hand to hand, chief among the wares the pedlar b
his pack. In the chap-books of the Elizabethan period,
kept romance alive in the minds of simple people,
those dreams of extraordinary adventure to which
dramatists of the Renascence appealed and at which ot
them mocked. By means of these compilations, the
Ages were kept from dying altogether, and sank, in
to deeper and deeper strata of consciousness. Whateve
have been the value of the new works which spra

favourite appeal to popular imagination. They shared the role with the ballads, which were multiplied in the same period as they, and which often epitomized in a few verses stories like theirs.

Among the prose versions of old romances published by Caxton there was, however, one which was to be not only food for the people but also a feast for the fastidious. Caxton was well inspired on the day he printed Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*.[1] He tells us that when he had published the noble feats of Hector, Charlemagne, and Godfrey of Bouillon, he was 'instantly required' by 'many noble and divers gentlemen' also to imprint those of Arthur who belonged to the realm of England. In reply, he pleaded that 'divers men hold opinion that there was no such Arthur,' yet allowed himself to be persuaded. The translation he used was ready to hand, having been made by Thomas Malory, knight, member of Parliament and Lancastrian, who shared the misfortunes of his party and died in 1471. His translation was completed in 1469 and published in 1484.

Malory represents himself as translating a French book. In truth he seems to have had recourse to many books, so that his *Morte d'Arthur* is a compilation. He has brought together scattered romances and co-ordinated them, without eliminating the traces of disparity. In spite, however, of the immense Parentheses which recount the separate adventures of Sir Balin, Sir Pelleas, Sir Palomides, Sir Bors, the history of Tristram and Isoud, we can distinguish in his work the lines of a dominant story, that of Arthur, which is logically followed by the tale of the Sangreal. Malory tells of Arthur's triumphant reign, the unfaithfulness of his wife Guenever who takes Launcelot for her lover, Launcelot's punishment by the failure of his quest of the Sangreal, the finding of which is reserved for the purer Galahad. He shows the knights disaffected to the king because of Guenever's sin, and relates Mordred's revolt and Arthur's death. The book ends religiously, for Guenever becomes a nun and Launcelot a hermit. Romantic though it be, we feel that it bears a relation to actualities. The painter of the evils of civil war in this legendary kingdom was a victim of the Wars of the Roses, and the fact sometimes brings a moving gravity and melancholy into his pages.

[1] Editions: H. Oskar Sommer, 3 vols. (1889–91); E. Strachey (Globe Edition, abridged and modernized, 1893); A. F. Pollard (Routledge). See Eugène Vinaver, *Sir Thomas Malory* (Oxford, 1929).

But both this application to the author's own time a the moral lesson which unites the adventures are uncert vague, and hesitating in Malory's work. Even the mora inconsistent, for Launcelot and Guenever in their sin are ci as an example to true lovers. Hence the Puritan reproa formulated by Roger Ascham: 'the whole pleasure of whi booke standeth in two speciall poyntes, in open mans slaugh and bold bawdrye.' In fact, this over-loose compilation la unity both of thought and of plot.

It has, however, another unity, that of manner, tone, a atmosphere. Malory transports us to a strange country a distant world, unreal, impossible, and yet imaginati coherent—a country where all is tourneys and battles, wh the only dwellings reared are castles; a country with

them well—simple, even childish, monotonous, but harmoni and having poetic cadences. A clear, transparent, and smo style with no fixed date, though it breathes a soft arch odour. It betrays neither labour nor culture. The charm

Frenchman think of Perrault's stories, but it is the product a period which was less wise than Perrault's and of a narra less self-conscious than he. It is delicious prose of a particu kind, although unfit for other than its own purpose, as apparent when the author attempts to reason But wh he relates he reaches excellence. An artist like Tenny could do no better than translate almost literally Malor story of Arthur's death and of the colloquy between him a Sir Bedivere. There are even good judges who prefer Malor simple prose to the too elaborate verses of the Victorian po

The literary importance and influence of this collect cannot be exaggerated. It is England's first book in poe prose, and also the storehouse of those legends of the p which have most haunted English imaginations It is work which kept the chivalrous spirit alive among the liter

the poets, and the gentry, while the people were fed by the chap-books. Whether such a book would have met with a like fortune in France is doubtful. The author does not sufficiently dominate his material for a French audience. He is incapable of making an explanation or giving a sign of self-consciousness. He repeats his tale like a marvelling child trying to tell faithfully what it has heard and not entirely understood. He gives a wide field to the imagination and does not trouble himself about the intelligence.

The first important prose work that appeared after Malory's was another translation from the French. It was Froissart's *Chronicles*, translated by John Bourchier, Lord Berners (1467–1533)[1] and published in 1523–5. Lord Berners's excellent prose, as animated, lively, and highly coloured as his original, yet represents a return to the fourteenth century, as does also his other book, *Huon of Bordeaux*,[2] which contains the story of the dwarf Auberon. These books appeared when the humanist movement had begun, and the first troubles of the Reformation were manifesting themselves. Without abandoning French, writers were about to add to it the direct study of Latin or even Greek, and on occasion to prefer to it the southern languages. The same Lord Berners was a pioneer of the new prose and a precursor of the Euphuists in his translation of *The Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius* from the Spanish of Antonio de Guevara. He is the connecting link between the two ages in prose, as Skelton and Douglas, on very different grounds, are in poetry.

[1] Reprinted by W. P. Ker in Tudor Translations, 6 vols. (1901–3), and by G. C. Macaulay (Globe Edition, 1895).

[2] Reprinted by the Early English Text Society, extra series, xl, xli, xliii, and l (1882–7).

BOOK III—THE PREPARATION FOR THE RENASCENCE (1516–78)

CHAPTER I

THE PART OF THE HUMANISTS

1. *Special Characteristics of the English Renascence.*—The [illegible] the characteristics [illegible] was liberated and [illegible] framework; destiny [illegible] became [illegible] was [illegible] vards the enemy of this ally, the Renascence, men looked with a new wonder at the heavens and the earth as they were revealed by the discoveries of the navigators and astronomy; superior beauty was perceived in the literature of classical antiquity, particularly in the recently recovered works of ancient Greece

At the same time, the Renascence had in England certain additional characteristics which were so special that they gave rise to a truly national literature. The difference was mainly in the time of flowering and in the quantitative mixture of [illegible] pared with the same movement in Italy and France, may be stated as follows:

The renewal affected literature later and more slowly in England than in those countries. Not because humanism [illegible]

centuries had been a less direct expression of national senti-
ments in England than elsewhere. English literature had
been almost all imported from France, had mainly consisted
of translations and adaptations. It had not assumed a truly
national shape. The greatest poet, Chaucer, had been
essentially French. None the less, the truth remains that
although the Renascence and the Reformation beckoned to
new [illegible]
than [illegible]
ance [illegible]
was eminently aristocratic, in England it was always regardful
of the masses. It preserved and increased the vogue of the
ballads. The theatre, the home of the most magnificent
product of the period, was accessible to all men, appealed to
the humble as to the great. For the people follow in literature
fashions derived from former days, hold to them tenaciously
and do not abandon them.

A patriotism more and more intense and passionate, even
[illegible] by glorify-
[illegible] ditions, and
[illegible] an ambition
to rival the masterpieces of Greece and Rome as well as those
[illegible]

of the infatuations of the Renascence It is impossible to
say whether in England, in this century, Italy were more the
object of wonder or of scandal, of admiration or of disapproval.
[illegible] herself to be different

[illegible] (1490–1578).[1]—During
[illegible] about 1520, when the
[illegible]

More is in revolt against the spirit of chivalry. As much a humanitarian as a humanist, his hatred and contempt for war are like Swift's. Soldiers are to him 'men-slayers,' and he makes little of the point of honour and of military glory, of all that made up the atmosphere of the admired romances which Caxton had lately broadcast through the land. War was, according to More, justifiable only in the last resort, and should be waged in a purely utilitarian spirit, using the tricks of espionage and treachery. Unwittingly he was taking up the same ground as Machiavelli, who at this moment was writing *Il Principe*.

He extols communism, forbids the acquisition of property, and, reverting to the ideas of Lycurgus, discredits gold, which he would put to the meanest uses. He would make work compulsory for all men, but only for nine hours a day. Thus theft would disappear from Utopia and there would be no occasion to apply the hard penal laws of England.

In More's mind there is an ideal of a life which would be easy for the whole community. He is not of those whose consolation for the miseries of this present life is a picture of the life to come, for he cites happiness as the end of existence. He protests against asceticism and the contempt of well-being and honourable pleasure. It is from him that Rabelais borrowed the doctrine of his abbey of Thélème.

Like all Utopians, More bases himself on faith in the goodness of human nature. He believes in it as did Rousseau. His disapproval of asceticism causes him to glorify the senses which reveal natural marvels and God who made nature. He is regardful of everything which pertains to the body, of bodily health, necessary to the health of the soul, and of the comfort of dwellings. The Utopians do not suffer a man to be either cruel to himself or 'unkind to nature.'

In Utopia all religions are authorized and toleration is the law. Even the Christian religion, which has been introduced thither, enjoys no privileges. No religion has anything to recommend it beyond the examples it provides.

This book should be read as the exercise of a mind giving itself free play and unconcerned with the practical application of its own theories. More wrote in Latin, not for the people but for the learned. We are brought to ask, in astonishment, whether he did not, more than once, write against his own deep convictions. For the creator of this Utopia was a fervent Christian, a submissive Catholic, and an ascetic who wore a

It is a great pity that he did not write a work of such general interest as *Utopia* in English. His humanist's culture is not evinced only by his Latin writings. He left behind him certain pages in English which show, no less than *Utopia*, the degree to which this admirer of Plato was impregnated with Socratic dialectics. The dialogue between the old prisoner Anthony and his nephew Vincent, which More wrote in his prison, to prove that he was neither more unfortunate nor more of a prisoner than the rest of mankind, is so admirable that Socrates might have approved it or envied him its authorship. And if he be indeed the author of the historical fragment on Richard III attributed to him, he must be recognized as a rival of Tacitus, so vivid is the portrait he paints, so strong his colours, so intense his attack. It is to this fragment that the atrocious, implacable figure which has remained in men's memory is due, the character on which Shakespeare founded his famous tragedy. Whether the picture conforms to reality is doubtful, but artistically it is an astonishing success. It has unity of structure and effect far beyond anything hitherto achieved by an English chronicler.

The pages which prove More's solid classical culture represent only a part of his rich and complex personality, curious of everything in life and nature, conscious of the variety in the souls of various men. His favourite pastime was to observe the habits and instincts of animals. He had a spontaneous and most lively dramatic talent, and although he never wrote for the stage, he dramatized, in the driest controversial treatises, living and comic characters, who speak their own language or even their native dialect. His English prose abounds with humorous passages such as his predecessors lacked. It contains also many turns of familiar talk, sayings and popular expressions which he seems to have been the first to coin or circulate. One wonders if he took them from current speech, or invented them entirely. His natural gaiety, 'the kind and friendly cheerfulness with a little air of raillery' which was, Erasmus tell us, expressed on his face, season his prose, as it showed itself in his speech throughout his life and on the very scaffold. We do not know whether to praise him most for his humour or his wit.

Nevertheless, we cannot follow those who have called him the earliest of the modern English prose-writers. This humanist seems, if the doubtful case of *Richard III* be excepted, to have done all his artistic work in Latin. His English prose

is all improvisation, and he lets loose in it, without rule or measure, his extraordinary lawyer's flow of language. Hi

left this task entirely to men who were much his inferiors in

makes an impressive advance in clarity and construction on More's own writings.

(b) THE EDUCATIONISTS ELYOT, CHEKE, WILSON ASCHAM.—The men who were inspired by classical antiquity after More were educationists rather than imaginative writers. They have more in common with More's masters than with More himself. But they have over him the advantage that they wrote their best work in English

It is thus with Sir Thomas Elyot (1490–1546)[2] whose *Governour* appeared in 1531 This treatise on moral philosophy and education, written for those who would be called to govern their country, was founded on the Italian works of Pontano and Patrizzi and is full of the spirit of antiquity. It abounds with Greek and Latin reminiscences.

The influence of the civic morals of Rome is very evident in it, although Elyot was a convinced Christian He adapts the manner of Plutarch to English history, for instance in the

prose is less of the people and less spontaneous than More's, but, on the other hand, more restrained and classical.

The humanism of a man brought up on antiquity is also the

[1] Ed. by E. V. Hitchcock (Early English Text Society, 19..).
[2] Ed. H. H. S. Croft (1883). Foster Watson (Everyman's Library).

most salient characteristic of a book written against the seditious, *The Heart of Sedition, how grievous it is to a Commonwealth*,[1] by Sir John Cheke (1514–57), teacher of Greek at Cambridge. This good Hellenist, noted for the love of Greek which he spread around him, gave in 1549 forcible expression to English conservatism in his *Heart of Sedition*. It is directed against the Norfolk rebels who were led by the tanner Kett. Already we have that hostile picture of popular risings which recurs half a century later in Shakespeare's *Henry VI* and *Coriolanus*. Cheke shows himself vigorous in argument, eloquent, and occasionally homely and humorous. He has both the tone and the arguments which are heard again from the Shakespearian Menenius Agrippa.

Form was almost as important to Cheke as matter, and he made attempts to reform the English language. Sir Thomas Wilson (1525–81)[2] was concerned solely with style in his *Arte of Rhetorique*, published in 1553, in which this so-called English Quintilian recommends purity and simplicity of language. He reviews and derides all the verbal affectations of his time, and proscribes 'inkhorn terms,' 'outlandish English,' the barbarous legal language made up of deformed Anglo-Norman words, and the abuse of archaism by the 'fine courtier' who 'wil talke nothing but Chaucer.'

These men are good masters, sensible and sure, fashioning both mind and style by their precepts and example. But their personalities are too restrained to have made a deep imprint on their prose. Roger Ascham (1515–68)[3] had qualities which threw him more into relief. He was the most popular of the educationists of his time, and the most pungent of the group of writers—Cheke, Wilson, Sir Thomas Smith, and Watson—who about the middle of this century transferred from Oxford to Cambridge the honour of guiding England along the paths of the Renascence. Ascham was Cheke's friend, and in some degree his pupil, tutor to Elizabeth in his sixteenth year, a good Protestant, even tinged with Puritanism, yet prudent enough to be Mary Tudor's Latin secretary. He left behind him two books of which one was devoted to the physical

[1] 1st edition 1549. Reprinted by G. Langbaine (Oxford, 1641) and in Holinshed's *Chronicle*.

[2] Ed. by G. H. Mair (Oxford, 1909).

[3] Complete works, ed. Giles, 4 vols. (1864–5); English works, ed. Aldis Wright (Cambridge English Classics, 1904); Arber reprints of *Toxophilus* (1861) and *The Scholemaster* (1870); the latter also in Gregory Smith's *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1904). See A. Katterfeld, *Roger Ascham, sein Leben und seine Werke* (Strasburg, 1897).

education of the young and the other to their intellectu
instruction.

The first of them, Toxophilus (1545), is intended to revi

of his country is bound up with the practice of this obsole
sport.

His other book, *The Scholemaster*, was published in 157
two years after his death, and contains his advice to maste
on the teaching of Latin.

Ascham puts life into these treatises by his personal pr
sentment of his ideas. He brings forward his own practi
and experience, his memories, and interesting anecdol
related first-hand. His parentheses stimulate flagging atte
tion. His preoccupation with Latinity does not debar hi

of the English nobility, especially the dangerous sojourns
the country of licence which rich young men of wealth a
fashion were wont to make. He cares less for literary beau
and refinement than for solid and healthy education.

He also has the merit of having worked assiduously
advance the progress of the English language. He is awa
he says in his preface to *Toxophilus*, that to write in Lat
would have been 'more honest for my name,' but he decid

it. His style is much laboured, penetrated with Latin tur
of phrase and Latin elegancies. Numerous symmetric
balanced, antithetical sentences, sometimes marked by allite
tion, occur in his work, all that is best in the prose of t
Euphuists without
is true that Ascha
and hampered. B
the benefit prose
of the ancients, es
style and nervous conciseness Ascham imitates by turn
The training which he imposed on himself and which

recommended for schoolboys had a salutary effect. He desired that a pupil should first translate a passage from Latin into English, and then, after a sufficient interval, be required to put his own English version back into Latin. By repeated use of this exercise Ascham himself acquired a relative facility of expression. The too heavy clothing of his thoughts finally became so pliable that the man, sincere, sensible and good-humoured, can be descried beneath it. He is one of the earliest writers of classical English prose.

These were the chief of the educationists, such of them as left a name behind them. The work which was being accomplished at this time cannot, however, be understood unless we add to their number all the nameless makers of the Renascence, all the unknown masters who were training their English pupils in the universities and the schools to admire and imitate the masterpieces of antiquity.

CHAPTER II

MATION AND THE RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES FROM 1525 TO 1578

d not long remain without other admixture. it affected literature when its influence was
ppos
en of
Pope
culture was interrupted and they were drawn

t forty-three years old of remorse for having
stantism under Mary Tudor. Ascham in his
les Puritan ideas and pedagogic counsels. For
versy constituted all their life and the whole

ontroversy was from the outset mainly provided
on of the translation of the Bible into English
issolution of religious houses, both destined to

homas More and William Tindale into conflict.
ndale (1484–1536) [1] was the first to be inspired

25. In spite of the measures taken by Henry
ntroduced into England, where the ground had
l by Wyclif and where there were some local
he spirit of the Lollards. Tindale's version of
tament, which was founded both on Luther's

rks with preface by Foxe (1572); modern edition in the Publications; *The Ordinance of a Christian Man*, ed R. Lovett Mosley, *William Tyndale* (1937).

translation and on editions of the Greek and Latin texts elucidated by the commentaries of Erasmus, was a basis for the famous Authorized Version of 1611.

Tindale, who had been a pioneer during the dangerous years in which the Government of England was the champion of the papacy, maintained an active controversial defence of the Reformation. A good humanist, who had enjoyed a solid university education and knew the ancient and several modern languages, Tindale is a talented controversialist, especially in his treatise *The Obedience of a Christen man and how Christen rulers ought to governe*, which was printed in 1528. The advantage to the formation of vigorous, clear, and swift-moving English prose which arose out of the reformers' need to speak to the people is apparent in his work. In order to justify the translation of the Bible into the vulgar tongue, he not only uses the arguments based on good sense which appealed to the many, but also defends English against the orthodox allegation that it was incapable of rendering the original text adequately. He lays down that, on the contrary, 'the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than with the Latin.' He discovers a deep-rooted affinity between English and Hebrew, thus first perceiving a truth of which the application had presently to be extended to the very spirit of the two peoples. Like the humanists, he makes mock of the scholastics who applied Aristotelian logic to the interpretation of Scripture, and he is again in agreement with them in condemning the medieval romances, the stories of Robin Hood and Bevis of Hampton, Hector and Troilus. But it is for reasons of morals that he rejects these tales, as licentious and ribald fables, not because he wishes another aesthetic ideal to be adopted. It is neither Homer nor Virgil which he would substitute for them, but only the Bible. From the first, he marks the agreement and the disagreement of humanism and the Reformation.

It was Thomas More, the most lettered and skilful of the Catholics, who replied to Tindale, particularly on the question of translating the Bible. In this controversy More does not appear to advantage. He himself had recommended the translation of Scripture and he was obliged to contradict his own proposition. He liked, moreover, to write in Latin, and it was incumbent on him in this dispute to use English. His position was the difficult one of a quiet scholar who is compelled to take part in a public meeting and to speak against

liberty. He equivocated, hinted that the Church was not absolutely opposed to the translation of the Bible, but only to unfaithful versions falsified by heresy. But his acuteness

or withdrawn.

But the public demand had already gone beyond such partial toleration. Tindale was persecuted and put to death in the Low Countries in 1536. Yet Henry VIII had broken with the papacy and had sent Thomas More to the scaffold in the previous year (1535). The Reformation was officially

in these successive translations, and what was preserved by

tendency to pedantry of the most learned. Its effects were

[1] *Writings of Coverdale*, ed. Pearson (Cambridge, 1844)

[2] J. Dowden, *The Workmanship of the Prayer-Book in its Literary and Liturgical Aspect* (1899), and *Further Studies in the Prayer-Book* (1908)

the direction of Archbishop Cranmer, and its cadences are such as to lift up the hearts of the faithful like poetry and to awaken the admiration of purely aesthetic critics. In this prayer-book Latin sonority has passed into a tongue which seemed hardly able to contain it. The mingling of the Saxon and French elements of the language is perfect. The disjointed and jarring character of pure Saxon has been eliminated. Everything connects, blends, harmonizes, for instance in the General Confession: 'Almighty and most merciful Father, We have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. . . .'

These chosen sounds must be imagined rolling from the lips of a clergyman who is a skilled reader and who gives the rhythm to the congregation. It must be remembered that these sonorous and melodious phrases were repeated every Sunday in every church in England. Only thus can the impulse be understood which such a model could give to a language as yet indefinite and in search of paths.

2. *The Dissolution of Religious Houses.*—The other great change in the reign of Henry VIII which reacted on letters was the suppression of the religious houses from 1535 to 1539.[1] To-day it is still difficult to say whether the measure was to the detriment or advantage of learning. There was an enormous destruction of books, deplored by the Protestants themselves, for instance by Bishop John Bale, one of the most determined enemies of the papacy. The Benedictine monasteries, which had been asylums for studious clerks, disappeared, and no like places of refuge arose in their stead. The numerous schools attached to many religious houses vanished also, and it was a long time before they were all replaced. Such of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges as were reserved for the religious became empty. The two great universities lost a considerable number of students. Higher education suffered: Greek, which had been brilliantly taught since the end of the fifteenth century, almost ceased, for a long period, to be studied. It was many years before the reformed foundations of schools and colleges compensated for the losses.

On the other hand, the end of the monasteries hastened the abandonment of scholastic philosophy which they had principally maintained, and this was favourable to a bolder spirit of intellectual enterprise. For the relations of the religious

[1] See *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. iii, Chap. III, and F. A. Gasquet, *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, 2 vols. (1888).

houses in England with sister houses on the Continent, relations established by the Reformers with their brothers in Germany, the Low Countries, and Geneva were substituted. Finally, the books which escaped the plunderers did not remain secreted and immobilized on the shelves of monastic libraries, but were henceforth read and studied. The great ardour of antiquaries dates from this time. The earliest of them was John Leland (1506?–1552), who was commissioned

precious documents which had been delivered to the riflers, and was distressed to see young scholars sent from Germany to extract from them pages which went back with them to their own country, to rank there as national monuments. Leland spent six years travelling about England, exploring all the libraries, and he published a formidable list of the wealth he discovered. This was the limit of his capacity: his ambition to use his over-copious material was not realized. His *Itinerary* [1] served, however, to open a road, and at the end of the century it furnished Harrison [2] and Camden [3] and their like with material.

The same patriotic impulse is accountable for the many chronicles, Protestant in spirit, which appeared in the latter half of the sixteenth and the early seventeenth century.

origins, were written in collaboration with others, published in 1578 and continued to 1586, and were for long the great repertory of national history, used by Spenser and Shakespeare, among others. John Stow, between 1561 and 1604, issued eleven editions of his *Summarie of English Chronicles*. John Speed's *Historie of Great Britaine* was published in 1611, and

None of these authors is either a writer of great talent or

[1] *Itinerary*, first published by T. Hearne in 1710–12. Modern edition by L. T. Smith (1906–7).
[2] W. Harrison, *Description of England*, published in 1578 in Holinshed's *Chronicle*.
[3] W. Camden, *Britannia* (in Latin, 1586; English translation by P Holland, *Britain*, 1610).

a veritable historian. Almost all of them collect evidence uncritically and filch from their predecessors. They have a mediocre talent for composition and cannot resist puerile anecdotes. But they are all equally animated by the desire to glorify the part played by England in the past as in the present.

3. *Latimer and John Foxe.*—Besides these almost impersonal productions, the Reformation provoked in the middle of the sixteenth century the very living work of a preacher, Hugh Latimer (1485–1555),[1] whose energy and good sense produced some of the most pungent pages of English prose of the period. At a time when religion wavered, when the country abruptly passed from one form of observance to another at the will of the governors, Latimer, in spite of one or two politic retractions, showed almost continuous zeal and courage in preaching as he believed, against Catholicism during Wolsey's ministry, against the bastard reform of Henry VIII, and against the laxity of the Protestant clergy under Edward VI. He ended at the stake, having refused, under Mary Tudor, to repudiate his heresy. His last words to Bishop Ridley, the companion of his martyrdom, are famous: 'Play the man, Master Ridley; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England as I trust shall never be put out.'

These words have the accent of Thomas More, whom Latimer resembles in his homely, almost jocular manner of presenting his thought. He is like More, but has not his underlying refinement or his frequent moments of detached observation and reflection. Latimer's sermons are characterized by an absence of theology and dogmatic discussion. Born of the people, a farmer's son, his mind had a popular cast. His subject was morals, and he illustrated it by count- [illegible]ons to the most familiar things, proverbial turns [illegible] logues and conceptions which were striking in [illegible]y.

[illegible] the power of sermons and preached especially [illegible] who did not preach. In his most cele- [illegible]594, 'Of the Plough,' he attacks the [illegible] clergy. His wit is broad and he [illegible] a comic use of alliteration: they [illegible]unches,' 'mounching in their

[1] [illegible]arker Society, Cambridge, 1844), and [illegible]ching, *Sermons* (selected) in Every[illegible] [illegible]. J. Carlyle, *Hugh Latimer* (1900).

mangers.' He relates, with much go, how he went to carry the gospel to a village grown unaccustomed to sermons, and found the church empty, because it was Robin Hood's day:

[illegible]

A famous passage has its natural place in his argument:

[illegible]

And the devil will bring back popery:

Away with Bibles and up with beads! Away with the light of the gospel and up with the light of candles, yea at noon-days.

There are two pages on this theme, and their energy and redundancy are equally astonishing. The good Latimer's phrases have the very same turn as those of the stump-orators in London to-day. He keeps his audience breathless by his mixture of mother-wit and feeling and his sudden apostrophes. His great desire to be understood by the most ignorant makes him a pioneer among prose-writers He simplifies and clarifies. By instinct and for his immediate purposes he accomplishes a work analogous to that of a pedagogue like Ascham. He often formulates his phrases briefly and balances them symmetrically. Yet, preoccupied [illegible]

[illegible]

be claimed for John Foxe (1516–87) that he wrote the book of this century which, after the Bible, made most noise. His [illegible]

[illegible]

[1] Ed. Cattley, 8 vols. (1836–41), and Pratt, 8 vols. (1877)

scenes, the instruments of torture, the stake. Nothing did more than this work to spread hatred of the papacy in England and to maintain the spirit of heroism which was to appear again in the days of the Puritans. The book was known outside England, served the Huguenots as a breviary, and gave d'Aubigné material for 'Feux,' one of the books of his *Tragiques*. It was first written by Foxe in Latin, but was translated by him into an unadorned English, without literary form, minute and dramatic when it relates interrogatories and tortures. To-day it astonishes by the fury which animates it, and which can still hold a reader's attention, enormous though the volume be and terrible its monotony.

4. *Scotland. Lyndsay, Buchanan, and Knox.*—In Scotland the religious Reformation provoked a contemporary literary movement, evinced in the verses of Sir David Lyndsay, in the Latin works, both verse and prose, of George Buchanan, and in the treatises of John Knox.

Sir David Lyndsay (1490–1555) [1] is the last of the line of the Scottish poets of the fifteenth century. By the form of his poetry he connects with the Middle Ages, but his ardent Protestantism distinguishes him from his predecessors. His work consists of a series of virulent satires which herald d'Aubigne's *Tragiques*. Hence there is a certain contradiction between his matter and his manner. His denunciations of Rome are contained by the traditional frames. He is a Jean de Meung who writes a *Roman de la Rose* after Luther. There is the same discrepancy in his life as in his writings, for this fervent democrat, this associate of John Knox, was also the companion of James V from whom he received the high heraldic office of Lyon King of Arms.

Besides his *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, of which we shall speak presently, he wrote *The Dreme* (1528), *The Complaynt* (1529), *The Testament of the Papyngo* (1530), *The Historie of ane nobill and vailyeand squyer, William Meldrum* (about 1550), and *The Monarchie, or Ane Dialog of the Miserable Estait of this World* (1552).

With prolix energy, without discrimination or beauty, but with a certain biting force, he denounces in these poems kings and prelates and their abuses and impostures. In his *Dreme* he descends into hell, where he sees popes, emperors, kings, cardinals and archbishops chastized for the ambition which kept them from succouring and instructing the poor. His

[1] Works edited by D. Hamer, 4 vols. (Scottish Text Society, 1930–4). See W. Murison, *Sir David Lindsay* (1938).

Lyndsay's satires were at first predominantly social, but with years they became more and more Protestant. His last and most considerable poem, *The Monarchie*, is a history of the most famous kingdoms of the earth, beginning with Daniel's vision of the four beasts which became the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The author's basis is one of Knox's sermons. His octosyllabic lines are so virulent as to recall Skelton, whose verses they surpass in regularity, but also in an inexorably prosaic quality. Lyndsay has nothing of the poet except metre, but his brutal satire strikes hard and multiplies blows without flinching. Often coarse, he owed his immunity from persecution to his licentiousness For Lyndsay as for Rabelais, ribaldry was a passport for daring.

The celebrated humanist George Buchanan (1506–82)[1] wrote almost wholly in Latin, and he therefore has here no place except as a witness to the classical culture of a Scot, and to the alliance between the Renascence and the Reformation which he represented. He had close relations with France, where he studied and taught, by turns in Paris and in Bordeaux where Montaigne was among his pupils. Reputed the first Latinist of his time, he was famous for his Latin verses and for his tragedies on the classic model, *Jephtha* and *Saint John the Baptist*. He had already distinguished himself by his satires against the Franciscans, the guardians of scholasticism, when, about 1560, he became one of the champions of Protestantism in his own country. It was at the moment when Scotland, impelled by Knox, was effecting her religious reformation. Buchanan, who until 1567 was Mary Stuart's tutor, became her determined enemy after the murder of Darnley, and wrote against her his *Detectio Mariae Reginae*. He ended as the stern schoolmaster of James VI, the pedant king, and wrote his *De Jure Regni apud Scotos* (1579) and his *Rerum Scoticarum Historia*. This was the last and most notable of a series of histories of Scotland which were written by Catholics and Protestants in the course of the sixteenth century and bear witness to the ardent Scottish patriotism. Buchanan has left behind him only two short

[1] Vernacular writings edited by P. Hume Brown (Scottish Text Society, 1892). Study by P. Hume Brown (Edinburgh, 1890).

treatises in Scots, but they are remarkable. His career shows what disturbance humanism suffered by the Reformation; party spirit is violently manifested by this man whose tastes first led him to pursue intellectual culture and learning for its own sake.

Buchanan left the glory of being the first great Scottish prose-writer to John Knox.[1] Knox (1505-72) was the reformer, the Calvin of Scotland. However fervently Lyndsay and Buchanan may have espoused the cause of reform, he was the Reformation itself. It was when he had taken refuge in Geneva with Calvin that he wrote, in 1558, his pamphlet against the two queens who were barring the spread of Protestantism in Scotland and England, *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. In 1559, back in Scotland and all-powerful there, he tormented and terrified Mary Stuart by his bold preaching, and until his death he pursued his ardent Calvinistic apostolate.

Knox, who wished for immediate effect, wrote in the language of his country. His *History of the Reformation of Religioun within the Realme of Scotland* is not the work of a professional writer, but of a man of action who relates history in which he played a great role. His composition is not good, but his book is full of matter, of vigorous and picturesque passages in which humour and satire mingle. His stories of the murder by the men of the reformed religion of their persecutor, Cardinal Beaton, and of his own interviews with Queen Mary, have been found worthy to be compared with the most expressive pages of Saint-Simon. Knox, who wishes to appeal to England as to Scotland, avoids the dialectal peculiarities of his mother tongue, and writes so as to be understood on both sides of the Tweed.

In all these men, and especially the Scots, there is something which presages a new era, social as well as religious, an age of democracy as well as of Protestantism. There are signs of a progress towards the triumph of the Presbyterians and the Puritans. In the meanwhile, the reformers' need to speak to the people frequently led them to use the vulgar tongue rather than Latin, and it is undeniable that they largely contributed to the advance of English prose, that medium which the humanists had too often disdained.

[1] Complete works edited by D. Laing, 6 vols. (Edinburgh, 1846-64). Life by P. Hume Brown, 2 vols. (1895). See also Andrew Lang, *John Knox and the Reformation* (1905).

CHAPTER III

POETRY—ITALIANISM, WYATT AND SURREY—SACKVI
THE 'MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES'—GASCOIGN

POETRY [1] owes less to the reformers. They kept a
it as secular and frivolous. It was humanism which
the renewal of poetry, and especially the influence of t
Renascence. The task involved was considerable,

court undertook the task, and it was in Italy that th
both models and stimulus. These pioneers, whos
were ended by premature death, were Wyatt and Su

1. *Wyatt.*—Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–42),[2] who
journs in France and Italy, brought back from t
country, in 1527, the admiration for lyrical poetry
found there, and a desire to fashion English verse on
of the Italians, or of the ancients seen through a
medium.

possible to find, doubtless in his earliest work, verses
there is no discoverable regularity in the use of acc
uncertain is his prosody, that we are driven to ask
he were unaware of the iambic rhythm, or whethe
nounced such words as *bannèr*, *suffèr*, *[dis]pleasure*,
iambuses, throwing the accent on to the last sylla
rhymes manifestly fall on unaccented syllables

Gradually, however, he attained to comparative r
He went further than this. He borrowed from th

[1] J. M. Berdan, *Early Tudor Poetry* (New York, 1920)

[2] A. K. Foxwell, *The Poems of Sir Thomas Wiat*, 2 vols (
1 vol.); E. M. W. Tillyard, *The Poems of Sir Thomas Wyatt*,
and a Study. See E. Bapst, *Deux gentilshommes et poètes d*
Henri VIII (1891); E. K. Chambers, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and O*
(1933)

poetic forms which were unknown to this fellow-countrymen. Sometimes he uses Dante's *terza rima*, sometimes Serafino's *strambotti*, octaves rhyming as *abababcc*, and sometimes he imitates the Petrarchian sonnet. It was this last importation, effected in France at much the same time by Marot and Mellin de Saint-Gelais, which had by far the largest consequences. This was due not only to the beauty of the form, but also to the fact that the sonnet was then the principal vehicle for the direct expression of personal feeling, without recourse to fiction or allegory.

It was by the sonnet that lyricism again entered English poetry. Whether it were translated or imitated mattered little. It rendered the music of feeling or passion. It called forth the rare word, the metaphor, subtlety and condensation. Its very brevity necessitated artistic labour.

Wyatt wrote no memorable sonnets, but he blazed the track. His imitations of Petrarch brought bold and new images into English. He speaks of love who

> Into my face presseth with bold pretence,
> And there campeth displaying his banner,

and tells that, upon rejection,

> . . . to heart's forest he fleeth,
> Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry.

This impassioned language was current and normal fifty years later, but before Wyatt it was entirely unknown.

Wyatt's sighs and supplications are Petrarchian. He is himself in other sonnets in which he pulls himself together and tells his mistress hard truths. His nature was frank and manly, like the proud portrait which Holbein made of him. The groans of humility suited him ill:

> My heart I gave thee, not to do it pain,

he says; and again:

> For he that doth believe bearing in hand,
> Plougheth in the water and soweth in the sand.

He bids farewell not to his mistress only, but to love also:

> Farewell, Love, and all thy laws for ever:
> Thy baited hooks shall tangle me no more:
> Senec and Plato call me from thy lore
> To perfect wealth, my wit for to endeavour.

And he bids love:

> With idle youth go use thy property.

He does indeed renounce love poems for satire. And his satires, imitated from Horace and Alamanni, are among his happiest innovations, reflecting his energetic and bold character. The courtier, withdrawn from the court, relates

and the country mouse, perhaps less happily than those predecessors, but with a proud accent to point his moral reflections.

The cavalier tone of his personal sonnets and his satires recurs in a few poems which are true songs, for instance, that beginning, 'Madam, withouten many words,' in which he calls upon his mistress to answer him yea or nay, and that last summons to his lute which has kept its place in most anthologies:

> My lute, awake! perform the last
> Labour that thou and I shall waste;
> And end that I have now begun:
> And when this song is sung and past,
> My lute, be still, for I have done.

2. *Surrey.*—Although he speaks of his vanished youth,

verse. Almost all the verses he left behind him are regular

vention, Surrey sang in sonnets his entirely imaginative love for Geraldine, or Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald. The elegiac tone is natural to him. His special note is that of love for nature, and with happy effect he mingles descriptions of nature with his love plaints.

But it is perhaps in some impersonal sonnets that his merit as an artist shows itself best. There may be a satirical allusion

[1] Poems edited by F. M. Padelford (Washington, 1920, revised 1928). See E. Bapst, op. cit.

to a contemporary personage in his sonnet on Sardanapalus, but it should be read for its absolute value, its dignified swing, its structural force, and its effort to condense thought:

Thassyrian king in peace, with foule desire,
And filthy lustes, that staynd his regall hart,
In war that should set princely hartes on fire:
Did yeld, vanquished for want of marciall art.
The dint of swordes from kisses seemed strange:
And harder, than his ladies syde, his targe:
From glutton feastes to souldiars fare, a change:
His helmet, farre above a garlands charge.
Who scarce the name of manhode did retayn,
Drenched in slouth and womanish delight,
Feble of spirte, impacient of pain:
When he had lost his honor, and his right:
  Proud, time of wealth, in stormes appalled with drede,
  Murthered himself to shewe some manful dede.

A like grandeur distinguishes the sonnet which praises Wyatt for his translation of some of the Psalms of David. The humanist is betrayed in an allusion to Alexander preserving Homer's poems in an ark of gold, and is revealed elsewhere also, even in the love effusions, for instance in that curious lyrical piece, 'When raging love,' in which the poet consoles himself for his heartaches by thinking of the countless ills endured by the Greeks before they became masters of Ilion.

Nature and the poets of antiquity alternately console Surrey for his lover's griefs and his sadness when he is in prison. His most intimate poem is that in which, 'prisoned in Windsor he recounteth his pleasure there passed':

Where I in lust and joy,
With a king's son, my childish years did pass,

the allusion being to his close friendship with the Duke of Richmond, natural son to Henry VIII. The elegy depicts his early joys—games, hunting, the 'secret groves' and the 'wild forest,' above all the pleasures of friendship:

The secret thoughts, imparted with such trust,
The wanton talk.

No other poem gives in so short a compass a richer description of the luxurious and chivalrous life of a young nobleman:

The palme-play [1] where, despoiled for the game,
With dazed eyes oft we by gleams of love
Have missed the ball, and got sight of our dame,
To bait her eyes, which kept the leads above.

[1] Tennis

Remembering that nearly all Surrey's vers[e]
and sure harmony, one cannot exaggerate the lo[ss]
lish poetry suffered by his premature death.
influenced by the Italians than Wyatt, he had a
sense of what befitted the poetry of his nation
on the Italian model ...

[illegible]

... ample of Cardinal Ippolito de' Me[dici] ... to make
The innovation is in the pure spirit of the Renascen[ce]
to be attempted in all modern languages, with uneq[ual]
How indeed was it possible not to blush for rhy[me]
none of the ancients authorized by their example, a[nd]
try to dispense with it when translating their he[roic]
Surrey's blank verse is simply the decasyllabic or he[roic]
shorn of its rhymes. Of classical origin, it is learn[ed]
in no way popular. That Surrey was able immed[iately]
give it almost all its distinctive characteristics is ren[markable].
It had to be saved from too close resemblance to
decasyllabic verse; it was necessary that the sense of t[he]
should not be complete at the end of each line, for th[is]
have caused the lack of rhyme to be felt and produce[d]
some monotony. To avoid this defect, Surrey dec[ided to]
imitate Virgil in dividing lines, letting the sense run o[n from]
one line to another. But he did this too little, and w[ithout]
the sure touch and facility which his im[itators] ...
after him. His line ...
the epic tone, ar[...]
poetry than a [...]
was little remov[...]
proves that a re[...]
and 1540. If Surr[...]
smooth Virgilian b[...] ... [dign]ity and often stre[ngth].
Thanks to him, English poetry acquired a magnificent in[stru]-
ment, which, once perfected, became the metre of the dr[ama]
and of the epic.

Wyatt and Surrey published nothing in their lifeti[me].
It was not until ten years after Surrey had been leg[...]

murdered that Richard Tottel, the printer, brought their verses out, together with those of some inferior authors, in the famous collection of songs and sonnets commonly known as *Tottel's Miscellany*.[1] The influence of the two poets could not therefore be felt immediately, nor did it take effect as soon as the *Miscellany* appeared, numerous though the readers of this collection were. A whole generation passed before the lead of Wyatt and Surrey was followed. The very form of the sonnet was almost forgotten, and the name was used to designate short poems of very varying structure, often mere songs. These two poets must be admitted to have been much in advance of their time, English poetry to have been unripe for their ingenious essays. Yet they were in no way in revolt against the national tradition. Wyatt was a great admirer of Chaucer, had read the old poet assiduously. Nor did he reject the French models traditional in his country, for he made translations of Mellin de Saint-Gelais. But his Italianism did not take root in English poetry or bear fruit there until forty years after his death. Almost all the work of the French Pleiad was produced before England had made a step in advance. She did not even keep the position which these two young courtly writers had won for her.

3. *Sackville.*—Thomas Sackville (1536–1608),[2] the only poet after Wyatt and Surrey and before Spenser who left memorable verses behind him, reverted to the medieval tradition. He was, none the less, a humanist who gave England her first classical tragedy. But chance willed that his only contribution to poetry, other than drama, was the *Induction*, which was followed by *The Complaint of the Duke of Buckingham*, written in 1563 for the *Mirror for Magistrates*. This *Mirror* was a series of stories concerning the misfortunes of the great figures in English history, and was written by several poets. Sackville conceived the idea of the collection, and his verses constitute its only merit.

The conception is in itself evidence of the patriotism which was impelling Englishmen to explore their annals. This enormous poem is founded on Lydgate's *Falls of Princes*, which was an adaption of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*, previously imitated by Chaucer in his 'Monk's Tale.' The authors of the *Mirror for Magistrates* cull their examples not

[1] First published in 1557. Reprinted by Arber; scholarly edition by H. E. Rollins, 2 vols. (Harvard, 1928–9).

[2] *The Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. J. Haslewood, 3 vols. (1815). Sackville's complete works were edited by R. W. Sackville-West (1859).

out his syllables with striking emphasis but monotonous persistence. He has, however, undeniable artistic sense, and he uses this very ding-dong to reinforce the energy of his gloomy pictures. Spenser was inspired by him when he painted the most lugubrious scenes of *The Faerie Queene*, for instance the Cave of Despair, and even more when he wrote the melancholy stanzas of his *Complaints*, especially *The Ruins of Time* and *The Tears of the Muses*. Sackville really deserves to be called the connecting link between Chaucer and Spenser. He lacked the variety of both these great poets perhaps because he soon left poetry for politics, ending as Lord Buckhurst and Lord High Treasurer. We have to judge his lyrical powers from a single lyric. His verses were isolated in a generation of which the poetic faculty was mediocre, hardly existent. He deserves the glory of having helped to renew English poetry.

4. *Various Poets. Gascoigne.*—Nothing could be emptier than this period. A bare mention suffices for the 'tragedy' of *Jane Shore*, which was inserted by Thomas Churchyard in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, and was correctly versified but no more; for the *Eclogues* of Barnaby Googe (1563), poor in rhythm, Protestant rather than poetical; for the epitaphs, epigrams, songs, and sonnets in which George Turberville modestly imitated Wyatt and Surrey; and for Thomas Tusser's advice to farmers and their wives, swelling in bulk from 1557 to 1573, *Hundreth Good Pointes of Husbandrie, A Hundreth Good Poynts of Huswifery, Five Hundreth Pointes of Good Husbandry*. Tusser's collection of practical counsels are completely prosaic, yet have some go and wit, and they are written in popular four-accented lines which seem to move at a gallop.

Verse continued for the most part to appear in collections or miscellanies, issued by a bookseller and induced by the success of *Tottel's Miscellany*. They were of diminishing interest. They included *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises* (1576), by Richard Edwards, choirmaster of the Chapel Royal, and the *Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions* (1578), collected by Thomas Proctor.

Only one writer deserves less cursory notice, George Gascoigne (1525?–77),[1] who essayed to grope his way along all

[1] Complete works ed. by W. C. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1869–70), and by J. W. Cunliffe in 1907, and for the Cambridge University Press in 1910. See also the study on Gascoigne by F. E. Schelling (Boston, 1893).

CHAPTER IV

THE THEATRE FROM 1520 TO 1578[1]

1. *Humanism in the Theatre.*—English dramatic writing produced no masterpiece in this period, yet felt its way along the most various paths, and acquired an experience without which the Elizabethan drama would have been impossible. It partook both of the past which had survived, and of the future for which it was preparing.

The miracle plays were performed almost till the end, although, since the Protestants looked askance at them, they gradually lost ground, and the cycles of the different towns disappeared, one after another, as the Reformation advanced. In any case, these plays did no more than prolong their existence. They no longer changed: they merely persisted in the form which they had assumed in the fifteenth century. The interesting point is that they still had a large public, and that dramatic innovations did not supplant them, but were introduced side by side with them.

Moralities, on the other hand, did not only continue to be much appreciated, but were also modified and renewed in accordance with circumstances. Those produced until about 1520 were Christian and no more. They may be said to have had neither place nor date. But the moralities came to be impregnated with the spirit of the Renascence or the Reformation. Two distinct groups of them appeared, which voiced repectively humanist and Protestant tendencies.

Tedious though was the morality *Magnificence*,[2] written by John Skelton about 1516, it yet showed a new standpoint. It did not merely, like its predecessors, represent the struggle between Heaven and Hell. Skelton, who seems to have aimed at warning Henry VIII against mad extravagance, does not deal with the great problem of Christianity, but enforces a particular moral lesson. His hero, Magnificence, is brought to ruin by a succession of bad counsellors, and would kill himself were he not saved by the intervention of Good Hope,

[1] A. W. Reed, *Early Tudor Drama* (London 1926).
[2] Edited by A. Dyce, *Skelton's Works* (1843), and by R. L. Ramsay (1906).

Circumspection, Perseverance, and others. This is the first specimen of a laicized morality.

In its two successors the spirit of the Renascence is much more clearly marked. They are inspired neither by the usual moral lesson nor by religious faith, but by the love of knowledge. Manifestly they were born in academic circles

devil

ited in

It is

thor is

under the influence of the tales of Amerigo Vespucci. He teaches geography, cosmography, almost all the sciences

Humanity, son of 'Natura Naturata.' He is entrusted to Studious Desire, but his progress is interrupted by the temptations of Sensual Appetite, who takes him to the tavern. The child has interpreted ill the words of Nature, who bade him use his senses. Only at the end of the play does he again show a taste for knowledge.

Sensual Appetite here plays the part of clown, as does his friend Ignorance, who detests philosophers and astronomers

mightier than

greatest lord

nd servants in

For all that they be now in this hall,
They be the most part my servants all,
And love principally
Disports, as dancing, singing,
Toys, trifling, laughing, jesting,
For cunning they set not by

A geography lesson produces a burst of patriotism. Studious Desire instructs Humanity that the earth is round; Experience displays a globe, enumerates the countries she has visited,

[1] Edited by W. C. Hazlitt in Dodsley's *Old English Plays*, vol. i (1874)

CHAPTER IV

THE THEATRE FROM 1520 TO 1578[1]

1. *Humanism in the Theatre.*—English dramatic writing produced no masterpiece in this period, yet felt its way along the most various paths, and acquired an experience without which the Elizabethan drama would have been impossible. It partook both of the past which had survived, and of the future for which it was preparing.

The miracle plays were performed almost till the end, although, since the Protestants looked askance at them, they gradually lost ground, and the cycles of the different towns disappeared, one after another, as the Reformation advanced. In any case, these plays did no more than prolong their existence. They no longer changed: they merely persisted in the form which they had assumed in the fifteenth century. The interesting point is that they still had a large public, and that dramatic innovations did not supplant them, but were introduced side by side with them.

Moralities, on the other hand, did not only continue to be much appreciated, but were also modified and renewed in accordance with circumstances. Those produced until about 1520 were Christian and no more. They may be said to have had neither place nor date. But the moralities came to be impregnated with the spirit of the Renascence or the Reformation. Two distinct groups of them appeared, which voiced repectively humanist and Protestant tendencies.

Tedious though was the morality *Magnificence*,[2] written by John Skelton about 1516, it yet showed a new standpoint. It did not merely, like its predecessors, represent the struggle between Heaven and Hell. Skelton, who seems to have aimed at warning Henry VIII against mad extravagance, does not deal with the great problem of Christianity, but enforces a particular moral lesson. His hero, Magnificence, is brought to ruin by a succession of bad counsellors, and would kill himself were he not saved by the intervention of Good Hope,

[1] A. W. Reed, *Early Tudor Drama* (London 1926).
[2] Edited by A. Dyce, *Skelton's Works* (1843), and by R. L. Ramsay (1906).

trade. With his last farthing Pauper buys a thousand years' indulgence, but when he asks to see his purchase a fight ensues and the relics fall into the gutter.

These passages give an idea of the violence of the attack and of the life it imparted to the morality.

The Protestants of England were no less ferocious. Their most famous dramatic champion was Bishop John Bale (1495–1563), who even attempted to turn the fixed and traditional miracle plays to Protestant uses. Under the name of tragedies, comedies, and interludes, he wrote scenes in harmony with the reformed faith, taking them from sacred history and principally from the life of Christ. But he gave the chief of his efforts to morality plays, combined with history which was sometimes contemporary, as in his *Proditiones Papistarum* and *Super utroque Regis Coniugio.* The most interesting of his dramatic essays is, however, his allegory *King Jehan,*[1] in which he recasts history to his liking. He makes of the deplorable John a great king, hated and calumniated by the clergy. For John had been bold enough to rebel against Rome, and all his faults, crimes, and cowardice are therefore wiped out. He is represented as a man misunderstood, a noble victim, the first Protestant. This play merits a particular place in the history of the theatre. It is the half-open chrysalis, the morality play whence the historical drama is about to emerge. Real and allegorical characters are mingled in it. John is betrayed by Dissimulation and threatened by Sedition. Moreover, abstractions are changed in the course of the play into living beings. Sedition, for instance, becomes Cardinal Stephen Langton, Usurped Power the pope. This is a travesty of history and yet history, and, through the medium of another and Elizabethan work on the same reign, it was to leave its mark on Shakespeare's *King John.*

3. *Heywood's Interludes. 'Calisto and Meliboea.'* — John Heywood's (1497?–1580)[2] interludes or farces, written under Henry VIII, cannot be called Catholic answers to Protestant attacks since they preceded the offensive of the Reformers. Two of them were printed as early as 1533. Heywood, a good Catholic and the friend of Thomas More, wrote in the medieval tradition, in the spirit of the fabliaux which certainly did not

[1] Edited by J. M. Manly in *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearian Drama,* vol. i.

[2] *Dramatic Writings* ed. by J. S. Farmer (1905). See A. W. Pollard's introduction to *The Play of the Weather* and *Johan Johan* in Gayley's *Representative English Comedies,* vol. i (1903).

spare churchmen. He was original in avoiding morality plays and in having no purpose but to amuse. He has no notion of ecclesiastical or theological controversy. His interludes are mere comic dialogues, scenes from fabliaux sometimes modelled on the French. But he is of his own nation almost the only representative of this school of dramatic writing. The four interludes which he certainly wrote are [illegible]troversies in burlesque. In *Witty and Witless*, James and [illegible] better to be a fool or a wise man: [illegible] at the [illegible] loving mistress [illegible] re miserable, while another couple, a lover [illegible] in who is neither [illegible] dispute the right to be called the happier. [illegible] after the [illegible] four characters, a Palmer, [illegible] dlar, discuss which of them [illegible] grim declares that in all his [illegible] patience, and the others [illegible] it Heywood puts life into his characters [illegible] with a drollery which recalls Chaucer. There is a grotesque description of hell equal to the Sompnour's in the prologue to his Tale. Good humour reigns everywhere. Yet these writings are hardly dramas. If, as is probable, Heywood also wrote *The Pardoner and the Friar* and *Johan Johan*, the story of a husband deceived by his wife, Tyb, and Sir Johan, the parish priest, he came much nearer to farce in them. Their characters and incidents conform excellently to the old comic tradition, and their dramatization could not be more vigorous. In these [illegible] inspired by French originals, *Farce* [illegible] and *Farce* [illegible] under Henry VIII he never even sugge[illegible] [illegible] the comic monologue *Thersites*, played [illegible] of style [illegible] eminiscences. The play [illegible] Latin of Ravisius Textor, or Jean Tixier de Ravise, professor of rhetoric in Navarre College in Paris. Antiquity supplied the material

1

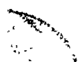
of spectators might spread the plague, during these yea
which it was endemic.

practice in order to be worthy to play before her.
Privy Council supported them against the City. They
played in London in the courtyards of certain inns. T

The Inns of Court were a home for the drama of clas
tendencies, and a connecting link between the stage of
universities and that of the popular theatres.

by other London schools — St. Paul's, Westminster,
Merchant Taylors'—where the most gifted pupils were tra
to act and were proud to contribute to the royal divers
Nothing, not Puritan disapproval nor civic alarms, c
stem the growing passion for the theatre which was felt by
whole nation—nobles, burghers, and people.

(a) THE CLASSICAL INFLUENCE. COMEDY.—The first
lish comedy of the classical school was *Ralph Roister Doi*



Italian influence is yet more apparent in a free adaptation by an unknown author of the Florentine Grazzini's *La Spiritata*, under the title *The Bugbears* (1561), in which a son obtains three thousand crowns from a miserly father by frightening him at night with noises attributed to ghosts, and is thus enabled to marry his mistress. Other plays inspired by Italian comedies also appeared, but only their names have been preserved.

(*d*) FORMATION OF THE NATIONAL DRAMA.—Each of these classical, neo-classical, and Italian influences had its part in blazing the track to the English national drama, which absorbed the most diverse elements. But there is a group of plays then acted which were not adaptations but truly English, and although they have weaknesses and an element of the ridiculous, they reveal the national drama as already almost a reality. They conform to that broad type which was finally adopted for drama and was followed by Shakespeare and his contemporaries.

Dramas of this type still partook of the morality plays, at least in right of certain characters, but they tended more and more to stage the scenes of an episode of history or a romance, and they were wont to relieve tragedy or romance by scenes of broad comedy, more or less skilfully related to the principal plot, thus observing the great tradition of the miracle plays.

The most striking of these plays are *Appius and Virginia* (1551?), *Damon and Pythias* (1564), *Horestes* (1567), *Gismond of Salerne* (1567), *Cambyses* (1569), and *Promos and Cassandra* (1578).[1]

Three are obviously connected with the moralities. Like Bale's *King John*, they mingle abstractions and real characters. *Horestes* is entitled 'A Newe Enterlude of Vice Conteyninge the Historye of Horestes' (Orestes). *Appius and Virginia*, of which the ridiculously emphatic language remained dear to Shakespeare's Pistol—'The furies fell of Limbo lake'—dramatizes the well-known story of Virginius, who slew his daughter to save her from the wicked judge Appius. Appius is impelled by the vice called Haphazard, and Conscience and Justice appear to him. Homely and comic scenes alternate with tragedy. There is a curious mingling of all the earlier dramatic elements with a classic theme.

[1] *Appius and Virginia* and *Damon and Pythias* are printed in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, vol. iv; *Promos and Cassandra* in Hazlitt, *Shakespeare's Library* (1875), vol. vi; *Cambyses* in Manly's *Specimens*, vol. ii; *Gismond of Salerne* in J. W. Cunliffe's *Early English Classical Tragedies* (Oxford, 1912).

of having
d step by
The full
Tragedie
Cambises,
unto his
Death, his one good deede of execution, after that, many wicked deedes and tyrannous murders committed by and through him, and last of all, his odious death by Gods Justice appointed.

wine, commits a series of atrocious crimes, almost all of them

him lifelike and complex enough, has shown his double physical and moral nature and given him a temperament. There is here a character which ought already to be called Shakespearian.

Cambyses is not always on the stage, but gives place to buffoons. We can discern, in the raw, the expedients of a playwright who, chiefly by varying his scenes, appeals to a heterogeneous public, caters for coarse as for other tastes in order to reach all his audience.

his chuckle we seem already to hear Iago, even more Gloucester (Richard III) winning Queen Anne's heart by false protestations

f love. This is the sàrdonic, diabolical, and sharp-sighted
inner, bad all through, without a trace of conscience,
apping his fingers at prejudices, his philosophy a
ndamental atheism.

The connection of the buffoonery with the tragedy is
ak, yet exists and is already a little Shakespearian. Thu-
mbyses has just decided to make war on Egypt when thre
diers enter, rejoicing in the prospective expedition, countin
slaughter and plunder. The truth, as undoubted in th
s of Cambyses as in the sixteenth century, is illustrated
war is not the exclusive concern of princes and generals,
is as much the common soldier's business as the king's.
larly Shakespeare, when he deals with Falstaff's enrol-
s, shows the seamy side of the glorious profession of arms,
ting the point of view he keeps in all his popular scenes,
er English or Roman. It is the tradition of the miracle
combined with that of the morality plays.

Cambyses all the education of the plot is spectacular.
urders are not recounted, as in *Gorboduc*, but the play-
carefully stages them in full. He reproduces the
ion of Sisamnes, who is beheaded and scalped—the
stage directions stipulate for a false skin—his scalp
fterwards pulled down over his ears. On the stage,
es, to prove that he is not drunk, pierces the son of
e full in the heart with an arrow.

same time, this author carries pathos to the highest
He puts into the mouth of the dying child of Praxaspe
complaints which bring tears perforce. The scene
tle Isaac ready to go to the stake in the mystery of
and anticipates the child Arthur in Shakespeare's
seeking to move Hubert who has been ordered to
is eyes. But Preston reaches a yet higher degree of
He sends a mother to mourn over the body of her son,
Cambyses to have the child's heart cut out that the
know it was wounded in the very centre. After
ould an audience be satisfied with only hearsay of
essengers' tales?

nsate for these episodes, Preston gives his public
scene, a garden in which a fair lady and a lord
the paths while the lord supplies the absence of
escribing the landscape and the flowers. Thus a
h air blows through the horrors of the melodrama.
reveals on examination all the characteristics of

English drama of the great period. It lacks only two things, genius and style, or rather, perhaps, only one, genius made manifest in style.

The awkwardness of Preston's writing was so complete and his bombast so ridiculous that his play, after a long term of popularity, became the laughing-stock of succeeding dramatists. Shakespeare amused himself by parodying it in Falstaff, who says, when he wishes to use fine language, 'I will do it in King Cambyses' vein.' Preston's rhetoric is in the highest degree both frantic and artless. Some of his metaphorical epithets have the most ludicrous effect, as when a character speaks of her 'christall eyes,' or the mother of little Praxaspe of her 'velvet paps.' Moreover, the playwright is so little at his ease with the fourteen-syllabled rhymed lines which he uses for tragic passages, that he mutilates grammar by the suppression of articles or by most astonishing inversions in the very places in which he aims at simple statements of fact.

Undoubtedly the great lack was of a metre fitted to drama, a ductile line which would leave freedom of movement to the playwright. Failing this, verse might have been relinquished for prose. In verse, the attempt made in *Gorboduc* had not

and when prose was used with increasing frequency. As for the remaining and too prominent traces of the morality play, it was not difficult to get rid of them. Even in *Cambyses* they appeared only in the name of characters. To eliminate them from that play it would have been necessary only to rebaptize a few supernumeraries, including Ambidexter, who were still called after abstractions. Richard Edwards, the author of *Damon and Pythias*, a far better if a possibly less significant play than *Cambyses*, contrived to do without abstractions altogether. He produced a tragi-comedy which, save for its versification, would not have seemed out of place

works was very near.

BOOK IV—THE FLOWERING OF THE RENASCENCE (1578–1625)

CHAPTER I

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREAT PERIOD

1. *The Translations. Their Number and their Influence.*[1]– Although the great Renascence period, often somewha inexactly called the Elizabethan age, came to be markedl original, its literature had its rise among a multitude of ancier and foreign influences. The rich soil was fertilized by a dee layer of translations. By 1579 many of the great works c ancient and modern times had been translated into Englisl almost all of them by 1603, the end of Elizabeth's reign. Som of these translations formed current reading and some becam as popular as the best writings of English authors. There wei certain of them which had an influence equal to that of th masterpieces of the age.

It is easier to notice the rare exceptions constituted by th few important works which were omitted than to enumerat the Greek and Latin authors done into English during th century. It is surprising that, at a time when Platonisi awakened so much enthusiasm and inspired so many poet Plato was, save for some fragments, neglected by the tran lators, and that, while the English theatre was enjoying a unmatched flowering season, the Greek tragedians were fo gotten. Aeschylus and Sophocles were not touched. N was Euripides, save for his *Phoenissae*, of which Gascoigne, i 1559, produced a version entitled *Jocasta*, but one which h borrowed from the Italian. Of the Latins, Plautus wa overlooked except for *Menaechmi*, which was translated b Warner in 1595, although English comedy more than onc followed in the footsteps of Plautus.

[1] Many of these translations have been reprinted in the Tudor Translatio (two series, 1892–1909 and 1924–7). See *Cambridge History of English Liter ture*, vol. iv, Chap. I, and Franck Schoell, *Études sur l'humanisme continent en Angleterre à la fin de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1926).

Among the moderns, no translation was made of Machiavelli's *Il Principe*, although this book was a veritable guide to many statesmen, and was commented on and, above all, attacked by many writers. Nor was there any translation of [illegible]

all the others, of the past and of the present, were brought under contribution. It is true that all the translators were not able to use their originals directly, as was Philemon Holland, that good humanist and 'translator-general of his age,' who gave his country Livy (1600), Pliny the Elder (1601), and Suetonius (1609), not to mention Plutarch's moral writings (1603). But most used Italian and, in particular, French versions as intermediaries. Thomas North retrans- [illegible]

translation of the Greek historian had been based on the Latin of Laurentius Valla. Adlington's version (1566) of the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius was taken from Guillaume Michel's translation, his *Ethics* of Aristotle (1547) from the Italian, and his *Politics* (1597) from Leroy's translation. Sometimes French was an intermediary even between Italian and English, as for Bandello, who reached England by way of Belleforest's version.

[illegible]

suggest a translation. With a less sure and a more fanciful touch, but with a style which is full of go, John Florio, in 1603, gave Montaigne's *Essays* [2] to England. Like Plutarch's *Lives*, they became the everyday reading of many. Next to the Bible, they were the most widely known of foreign productions.

The translations in verse are more unequal. Some are deplorable, like Stanyhurst's *Aeneid* (1582), in which the

[1] In Tudor Translations (1895) and Temple Classics (1898–9).
[2] In Tudor Translations (1892–3), World's Classics, etc. See Mme Longworth-Chambrun, *Giovanni Florio* (Paris, 1921)

impossible hexameter is used, together with a most baroque vocabulary, interspersed with contemporary slang and vulgarisms. This is an involuntary caricature of the most harmonious of poets. Phaer's *Aeneid* (1562), while without such absurdities, lacks any positive merit, as do the translations by Golding of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid (1565–7), by Sir John Harington of *Orlando Furioso* (1591), and by Carew (1594) and Fairfax (1604) of *Gerusalemme Liberata*.

Du Bartas, who was admired as a Huguenot no less than as a poet, who was called the 'treasure of humanism and jewel of theology,' was happier than Ariosto or Tasso, for Sylvester, between 1590 and 1606, produced a vigorous translation of his *Semaine*, as bombastic and fantastic in style as the original, abounding in the composite epithets which the French soon rejected, but which found a home in English poetry, the English language being more adapted and propitious to their use than the French. This translation met with a considerable and prolonged success.

But the masterpiece of verse translation was incontestably Chapman's Homer. Thanks to Chapman, the *Iliad* (1598–1609) [1] became a great Elizabethan poem, vehement, rich in verbal audacities. It was doubtless far removed from the serene Greek simplicity, but its energy and brilliancy were such as to impassion, two centuries later, the young Keats, who had no access to the original sources of Hellenism.

These translations from du Bartas and Homer really became part of the treasure of Elizabethan verse, as the versions of Plutarch and Montaigne belong to the great prose. The same might be said of the passages from Ovid and Lucan, reproduced by a poet like Marlowe, or of du Bellay's *Visions* and *Ruines de Rome*, as rendered by a master of rhythm like Spenser. Side by side with these patent and frankly avowed translations, dissimulated borrowing and plagiarizing were frequent in this period in which literary copyright was disregarded. It will be seen that the sonneteers were the most considerable of the borrowers. English style and prosody were formed by these countless translations. They profited the great, the writers who were not robbers, but who found their language waxing rich and pliable by the schoolboy exercises to which it was subjected.

2. *Italianism*.—Among the foreign influences one was incon-

[1] Reprinted in Morley's Universal Library.

stably dominant, that of Italy.[1] Elizabethan literature, hich came to be the expression of the national genius, had birth in Italianism. The word may seem too narrow when e large number of French works then circulating in England e considered, and also the influence exercised by Spain, pecially through the medium of the chivalrous romances—*lmerin*, *Amadis*, and Montemayor's famous *Diana* were all me into English by Anthony Munday before the end of the ntury—and through the picaresque romance *Lazarillo de rmes*, which was translated in 1576. Since, however, ance and Spain were themselves impregnated with Italian lture, the English were apt to find Italy even in what these her countries produced. And in these years Italian books, e the journey to Italy, were the great matter in England. well as the works already cited, Castiglione's *Cortegiano*, anslated by Thomas Hoby in 1561, should be mentioned, e book whence the Elizabethan gallants derived the principles courtliness. Of more consequence to the development drama and the novel in English were the tales of the *vellieri*, the short stories told so dramatically, vivaciously, d skilfully by Boccaccio, Cinthio, Bandello, Straparola, and eir like. It is not easy to imagine how English drama would ve been nourished without these comic or tragic and often entious stories, these tales of pleasure, love, violence, blood, d tears. No complete translation of them was made at this ne, but many of them appeared scattered among successive llections, such as those of Fenton and Painter in 1567, hetstone in 1582, Turberville in 1587.

The meeting between the English and the Italian spirit ich had already enriched Chaucer's poetry brought a alth of splendour to sixteenth-century England. The glish character was, however, already at this time too finite and too insular merely to reflect a foreign country e Reformation had not yet penetrated the nation deeply, r absorbed it wholly, but it had made so distinct an impres-n that there was necessarily a reaction against the prestige the country which was the seat of Catholicism, and in which e Renascence had flowered with a sensual ardour remini-ent of paganism. By the second half of the century there re two opinions about Italianism: the new dangers to which aly exposed her admirers were cited in opposition to her

[1] Einstein, *The Italian Renaissance in England* (1892); M. A. Scott, *Eliza-han Translations from the Italian* (1916); Mario Praz, *Machiavelli e gl' Inglesi l' epoca elisabettiana* (Florence, 1930)

production was derived from patriotism. It sprang from England's growing consciousness of strength, her pride of prosperity, the spirit of adventure which animated her sons and caused them always to aspire to the first place, and her faith in her own destiny.

Everything, even religion, combined to stimulate and reinforce this patriotism. For very many, Protestantism, now triumphant, was no more than deliverance from foreign [illegible]

The Hebraic spirit was beginning to be substituted for the [illegible] of this over- [illegible], who, in 1580, [illegible] 'of England, as of a new Israel, his chosen and peculiar people,' and who ended by announcing that 'the living God is only the English God.'

[illegible]

religion but for games and pleasure, ambitious of the free [illegible]

allowed him, on the occasion of his divorce, to implicate them in the schism, and then accepted a sort of Anglican Catholicism, with a new pope in a king who was the slayer of women and the most hypocritical and bigoted of bloodthirsty princes. Under Edward VI they became real Protestants, and followed the services of their church in a Lutheranized prayer-book. Mary Tudor easily re-established Roman Catholicism among them, and might perhaps have reunited England to the papacy permanently, had not the prevalent indifferent and conciliatory spirit been alarmed by the burning of the Protestant martyrs, and had not the queen's marriage to Philip II irritated and disquieted patriotism. When Elizabeth restored Protestantism she did it amid general rejoicing, but as pope she was political, not devout, well fitted to govern men who desired independence of Rome, but were in no wise inclined to profound conviction or to proselytism. Public opinion supported the queen when she restrained the Puritans as when she opposed the Catholics.

4. *The High Conception of Poetry.*[1]—It was this tepid religious feeling which allowed literature to spring to vigorous life and the Renascence to flower. To the tardiness of the Reformation in closing its grip on the country England owes the glory of her drama, her most magnificent literary achievement, and also a large part of the glory of her other poetry under Elizabeth and James I.

This love of letters had its beginning in the patriotic pride which was impelling England to claim a pre-eminent place in every field of activity. She was nearly a whole century behindhand in maritime discovery and seafaring. With one bound she caught up with her rivals, Spain, Portugal, and France, striving to outdistance and oust them. For the first time she was actuated by the spirit of imperialism. It gave birth to a swarm of tales of distant exploration and ensured their success, stories which do not exactly belong to literature, but were an element of literary animation and fertility While Englishmen like Richard Eden, about the middle of the century, were translating and reproducing foreign stories of adventure, they were also becoming adventurers themselves and celebrating their own discoveries. In 1589 Richard Hakluyt published his great work *The Prin-*

[1] *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. Gregory Smith, 2 vols. (1904); G. Saintsbury, *History of Criticism*, vol. ii, book iv, Chap. V (1902); J. E. Spingarn, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance* (1899).

cipall Navigations, Voiages and Discoveries of the English Nation made by sea or over land . . . at any time within the compass of these 1500 yeares, and in 1598 he issued a much augmented edition thereof. His task was continued by Samuel Purchas, who, in 1625, brought the chronicle up to date in *Hakluytus Posthumus*.

Literature was swept onwards by this spirit of conquest and self-glorification. England balanced her literary accounts and was ashamed to realize her poverty as compared to France, her indigence by the side of Italy, and her virtual destitution in comparison with antiquity. The latest in the field, she decided, arrogantly, to become the first. She had faith in [illegible]

which the ancients and the moderns had won distinction—pastorals, epics, comedies and tragedies, lyrics of every form, every kind of prose, romance, criticism, history, and philosophy.

[illegible]

school of immorality, provoked Sidney's eloquent retort, his *Apologie for Poetrie*, written at the same time and in the same spirit as Spenser's lost treatise—*The English Poet*. Sidney recalls that to the Romans the poet was the *vates*, the diviner or prophet, and establishes his superiority over the historian and the philosopher. 'Of all Sciences,' he says, '. . . is our Poet the Monarch.' This gallant champion of jousts and battlefields considered that the poet deserved the laurel-wreath as much as the soldiers.

Spenser proclaims that heroes and famous poets are born [illegible]

Platonic doctrine was common to the men of the Renascence, but it seems especially to have penetrated English poetry, which had almost its sole theoretical basis in a belief in the

ords, the pleasure in the beautiful or at least in the
tic. The courtier was surprised to find the man of the

's punning. The awakening of mind and imagination
idden, lively, and general. It occurred first at court,
on spread throughout the nation.

'he Spirit of Independence. The Rejection of Strict
—For all the extensive borrowing from abroad and
d respect for ancient precedents and traditional rules of

ive was left to individuals. This is apparent if the
ge and
died.
type sy
ritten t
was burnt, and appeared in fragments only after his
There was more than one *Art of Poetry* compiled,
one of them had acknowledged authority.

Irregularities whatever, whether in the formation of words or in
bination of words into sentences, are allowable . . . almost any
speech can be used as any other part of speech. An adverb can
as a verb, . . as a noun, . . . or as an adjective. Any
djective, or neuter verb can be used as an active verb [1]

. Abbot, *A Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 5. See also W. Franz, *Shake-
rammatik*, 3rd ed. (Heidelberg, 1924).

of each word had been established once for all and independently of its use. While in lyrics and solemn poetry words had their full and constant phonetic value, in dramatic verse they were increasingly governed by circumstances, and suffered contractions and extensions entailed by the need of speed or emphasis. One word might be taken to contain a varying number of syllables. Words were elastic, could shrink or expand. The astonishing blank verse of the theatre, especially of Shakespeare's plays, provides inexhaustible material for the study of these varying inflections which almost always are found to conform to one law, to follow nature, that is true passion or feeling.

Versification was not reduced to a single principle, but sometimes acknowledged the syllabic and sometimes the accentual law. Some verses are governed by no rule except that of the recurring *ictus*, or beats. They disregard both number of syllables and number of regular feet.

The great mass of the verse is at once syllabic and accentual. The heroic or decasyllabic line, either blank or rhymed, has precedence, and is found on analysis to contain, as a rule, five iambic feet. But it remains syllabic only in virtue of the elastic prosody. And it allows of very great diversity in the placing of accents and the character of feet. It is a much varied, sometimes a very subtle, subject of study. The line differs, moreover, with different poets. Spenser's rhymed line is very different from Donne's; Marlowe's, Dekker's, Fletcher's, and Massinger's blank verse are of widely diverse types; and such metrical evolution can be discovered in the course of the poetical career of Shakespeare, considered by himself, that it has been possible to found on it the chronology of his dramatic works.

Analogous remarks apply to the combinations of rhymes and stanzas. The couplet or rhymed distich, which was to be adopted almost exclusively by the classical school, was already used frequently, but in its structure there was a freedom which subsequently disappeared. Its rhythm is varied because the place of the pause is shifted and because the sense is often continued from one line to another. The line is rarely self-contained, as it came to be later, and it keeps, if it does not enlarge, the freedom of movement which Chaucer had given it.

English poets were curious of every happening in continental literature, and were aware of the rules for the use of masculine and feminine rhymes introduced by the Pleiad. In France,

the principle of the alternation of the two kinds of rhyme was established when Sidney and Spenser began to write. Sidney [illegible]

[illegible]

whether he would write a particular poem in masculine or in feminine rhym [illegible] did it allow hi [illegible] Where choice [illegible] regulation was introduced, and was accepted with surprising unanimity, not only for songs, but also for the longest narratives. At one blow, some harmonious combinations were ruled out, for instance the tercets of the sonnet, which was debarred from the *abc abc* disposition of lines. English poetry did without such rules. In the classical period it almost reached the point of abandoning the feminine rhyme altogether, or relegating it to the domain of humorous verse. But Elizabethan poetry proscribed nothing, and used feminine rhymes abundantly, never, however, in obedience to a mechanical external law, but always to produce an effect of sweetness and melody. This small point shows the divergence of form between the poetry of France and of England at the Renascence. In consequence, it was more possible in England than in France to refine on the varieties of the stanzas for which France had supplied the model and to multiply their types.

CHAPTER II

THE PIONEERS: LYLY, SIDNEY, AND SPENSER

THE habitual distinction between prose and verse must be momentarily suspended in order to present together the three men who, about 1578, simultaneously, although with very unequal resources, were initiators of the literature dedicated to beauty. It is a distinction which loses importance at this time, because poetry penetrated everywhere. The prose of such romances as *Euphues* and *Arcadia* is entirely poetic. Only the drama really needs separate study. Lyly, except for his dramatic work, Sidney, and Spenser are rightly presented side by side.

1. *John Lyly.*[1]—John Lyly (1554–1606) is the first in date of the writers who consciously and persistently used an artistic style and whose chief aspiration it manifestly was to say a thing well. It is even possible to ask if Lyly had any other clearly determined aim. But that his art was mainly artifice is a matter of little importance. He fulfilled the expectations of his fellow-countrymen so opportunely that his studied and strange way of writing set the fashion for a long period. For a good dozen years the 'euphuistic' manner which he inaugurated reigned at court and spread thence through almost all literature.

The father of euphuism was born of a family of grammarians. He was the grandson of the William Lily who was the friend of Erasmus and More. After studying at Oxford, 'where I tyred at a drie breast three yeares,' he went to London, and there, with the help and patronage of Lord Burleigh, was able to live by his wits, at first in the guise of a moralist. In 1578, at the age of twenty-four, he published his famous *Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit*, a book filled with wise lessons and bristling with attacks on irreligion and immorality. The hero, Euphues, or the Well-endowed, is a young Athenian—a disguise for an Oxford man—noble, handsome, quick-witted, and with a passion for travelling, but also presumptuous, apt

[1] Complete works, ed. by Bond, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1902); *Euphues*, ed. M. W. Croll and H. Clemens (1916). See A. Feuillerat, *John Lyly* (Cambridge, 1910); M. Jeffrey, *John Lyly and the Italian Renaissance* (Paris, 1929).

to misuse his gifts, and too little disciplined by education. He goes to Naples—which is to say London, or rather the Italianate society of the capital—a city which is a proverb for licence. He is deaf to the counsels of a wise old man who enumerates to him the vices of the town, and enjoys himself very much there, frequenting parties and festivities and

which surrounds him.

When a friend introduces him to his mistress, Lucilla, he

leaves Naples in disgust and returns to Athens, the city of

belief in God.

The book had an undoubted success, proved by the four editions into which it ran in eighteen months, but it aroused anger in some quarters. Oxford complained of having been

them he writes. '*Euphues* had rather lye shut in a Ladyes casket than open in a Schollers studie.' All the satire of the earlier book has gone. English beauty is declared unsurpassed. 'There is no beautie but in England.' Englishwomen are the most chaste of their sex, at whose altar Lyly

and virtue. Iffida dies of grief because she has lost her Thyrsis and repels all the lovers who would console her. Camilla remains faithful to her Surius in spite of the suit of the inflammable Philautus. The story varies these perfections by

witty and realistic scenes which faithfully portray London society, graceful analyses of feminine sentiment, and even an original character—Lady Flavia, the matron who has passed the age of passion, but likes to be surrounded by loving young couples, helping them while she mischievously reveals their manœuvres. Euphues is reduced in this book to a spectator whose business it is to express his admiration for England and the English.

Lyly, although he was preceded by the translators of the *novellieri*, Painter, Fenton, and Pettie, has been justifiably called the first English novelist, that is the first storyteller who made it his business to paint society unromantically. But the matter of his *Euphues* did not, by a long way, delight his contemporaries as did the mannered graces of the style he affected.

There are in euphuism two distinct elements. There is first a principle of counterpoise and symmetry in sentences, a way of balancing clauses. The tendency in this direction was widespread in this century. Ascham, for instance, attained to symmetry by imitating Seneca's antitheses. Even the alliterations which Lyly used to emphasize balance had been employed by more than one of his predecessors, among others by Pettie in *A Petite Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure.* But Lyly does constantly and methodically what his forerunners did spasmodically. He makes a rule of the accidental. Moreover, he refines on their accomplishment. He doubles their simple alliterations, making his either direct or crossed (as in 'The *h*ot *l*iver of a *h*eedlesse *l*over,' or 'Let my *r*ude *b*irth excuse my *b*old *r*equest'). A prose thus constituted is almost as regulated and measured as verse. Manifestly it suffers from excesses, and these are to-day more conspicuous than its other qualities. Yet the innovation it represented was of service at a time when there was need to cast the formless in a mould, to impart art to the inartistic.

The second element of euphuism is more peculiar to Lyly. He wished to decorate his style and knew not how to do it except by images and similes. It was necessary to render the abstract concrete. Unfortunately Lyly knew books well and nature very ill. He therefore had the idea of finding ornaments for his prose in ancient mythology and history and in fantastic notions of natural history borrowed from Pliny the Elder through the medium of the bestiaries, herbaries, and lapidaries dear to the Middle Ages. These compilations

cruelty of the wretched and godless Cecropia, apt for every crime, as she inflicts horrible physical and moral tortures on her prisoners. Even more Sidney enriched the descriptive art of his time, particularly where the painting of love is concerned, by his search for detail in his portraits, by his analysis of expression and gestures, and by his observation o the correspondence between attitude and feeling.

The value of *Arcadia* is thus in its manner, in the style which clothes it, and in which merits and striking defects mingle very strangely. Artifice is as much present as in euphuism, but is of a quite different kind. Sidney refines upon the refined; he is not content with purely verbal conceits although he perpetrates a few of them—'Zelmane, exceedingly sorry for Pamela, but exceedingly exceeding that exceedingness in feare for Philoclea.' Generally it is on thought or feeling that he refines, following his constant quest of the fair and the exquisite. A learned embroidery enriches the slightest details and heightens the most insignificant incidents, so that not a line of the story is left quite unadorned. But the decoration is not of the mechanical euphuistic kind, but is the result of the constantly active and constantly renewed play of fancy. Both the euphuists and Sidney aimed at imagery, but Lyly's images are like the flowers and birds on painted papers and printed stuffs. Sidney's images are woven into the very web of his fabric. They may be in doubtful taste, but they are creations.

It was essentially this quality which the French classicists were to stigmatize as preciosity and modern English critics as the pathetic fallacy. Sidney lends life, feeling, and will to the inanimate and the abstract. Cool wine, when he writes of it, seems 'to laugh for joy,' as it nears a lady's lips, bloodstained armour to 'blush that it had defended his master no better.' Hail is blown against a face by 'the pride of the wind.' When women, disporting themselves in a river, beat the water with their hands, 'the water, making lines in his face, seemed to smile at such a beating, and with twenty bubbles not to be content to have the picture of their face in large upon him, but he would in each of these bubbles set forth the miniature of them.' As these ladies came out of the water 'with some drops [it] seemed to weep, that it should pass from their bodies.' Such prettinesses recur in Shakespeare, scattered throughout is work, whether voiced by little Prince Arthur or Miranda r Antony. They have sometimes a charming effect of

gallantry. When Sidney's princesses dressed they 'covered their dainty beauties with the glad clothes'; when they undressed, they 'impoverished their clothes to enrich their bed.' Thus Romeo will ask:

> What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
> Of yonder knight?

The language of the most sugared courtesy is reached. The name a lady speaks is perfumed by her mouth. 'Plangus whose name was sweetened by your breath' is Sidney's rendering of 'Plangus whose name you have spoken.'

Pearls, with and without flaws, might be endlessly fished from this sea of preciosity. There is a general agreement of good taste that they are many too many, and that they are heaped pell-mell, true and false together. Yet each of them implies a refining effort and a love of the beautiful which is interesting even when it goes astray among the fantastic and the excessive.

All is not, however, vain ornament. Sidney, working at language, often by bold and new combinations of words reaches close and vigorous expression. He [illegible]
who [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible] was 'more dying in the [illegible] than in himself'; of Pamela that 'she could no longer keep love from looking out through her eyes and going forth in her words.' When a girl is in extremity of woe he speaks of 'her eyes wherein sorrow swam.' A lover pities his ears because 'you shall never hear the music of music in her voice.' Such passages, thrown into relief by a vigour of style hitherto unknown, are numerous.

But Sidney's real innovation was due, like Spenser's but independently of him, to senses sharpened by the contemplation of plastic works of art. In his romance, which he wrote when the *Faerie Queene* was no more than planned, he shows a sense of line and colour and of effects of light and shade hitherto unknown to the English. No one can appreciate him without reading the pages in which he describes Kalander's Italian garden and, above all, the works of [illegible] pavilion at the end of [illegible]
takes ple[illegible]

until after his death, it was Spenser who first revealed poetic

hopes. Spenser was the master of the language whose 'numbers flowe as fast as spring doth ryse.' He seemed able to tune English verse, w
tones of his voic
From the b
patriotic literary programme. He was a translator and admirer of du Bellay, and he aspired to awaken the national muse from her languor and make her rival her most illustrious sisters. But, unlike the Pleiad, he founded his faith on admiration for the old poets of his country. Over and over again he calls Chaucer his revered master, 'well of English undefyled.' He says that when he himself began to write verse he modelled himself on Chaucer, and if their temperaments were too much contrasted to allow of other resemblance, at least he saturated himself with the old poet's language. It was his intention not to break with the past, but to sink his roots deep into it. Hence he had, as compared with the poets of France, an originality which prepares us to understand the distinct character of his *Faerie Queene*

(a) 'THE SHEPHEARD'S CALENDAR.'—It is true that he began by clothing with his archaism a poetic *genre* which is in the spirit of the Renascence. He was first archaic in a pastoral. In his
his lov
words

to him, was pillaged by the Irish rebels in 1598. He died in London in January 1599.

His *Shepheard's Calendar* appeared in 1579; the first three books of *The Faerie*

Jones, *A Spenser Handbook* (New York, 1930)

provincial vocabularies. Thus he makes free imitations of Theocritus, Bion, and Virgil, especially of Mantuanus and of Marot, yet is never the mere reflection of an ancient or foreign writer.

The merits of the poem are properly those of style and are, in view of their date, astonishing. At last a poet had arrived who wrote neither carelessly nor laboriously. Quite unlike the 'ragged rymers' of the period, 'so pained and travailed in their rememberance, as it were a woman in childbirth, or as that same Pythia, when the traunce came upon her,' Spenser has an unfailing and truly admirable ease. The quiet, sure flow of his sentences is sheer enjoyment. He was even archaic with a very precise artistic intention, seeking effects analogous to those of the painters who:

blaze and portrait not onlie the daintie lineaments of beautie, but also round about it to shadowe the rude thickets and craggy cliffs, that, by the baseness of such parts, more excellencie may accrew to the principall: for oftentimes we find ourselves, I know not how, singularly delighted with the shew of such naturall rudenesse, and take great pleasure in that disorderly order. Even so doo those rough and harsh tearmes enlumine, and make more clearly to appeare, the brightness of brave and glorious wordes. So oftentimes a discorde in musicke maketh a comely concordance.

This is the first note of conscious artistry sounded by an English poet, and the first time that so close a parallel was made between poetry, music, and painting.

The impression of artistry is doubled when the versification of the collection is studied. Spenser's virtuosity at the outset of his career is surprising. Never yet had English poetry held, and never would it hold again, a poem in which the combinations of lines and rhymes were both as variously rich and as novel. In the *Calendar* there are as many as five different forms of stanzas in heroic or ten-syllabled lines. Elsewhere, in the songs, lines of unequal length are combined in small, quite novel strophes. Spenser's song on Elizabeth (Eclogue IV) has the light-hearted rhythm of the most graceful songs of the Pleiad. Certainly, matter is of less importance to him than form. To mourn the death of an unknown woman ('Dido,' Eclogue XI), he translates Marot's fine elegy on Queen Louise of Savoy, but he transfigures the French poem, of which all the lines are of the same length, by inventing a learned and varied stanza, closed by a refrain which rings like a knell. He really gives wings to a touching plaint which, in the original, clings to the earth.

These songs are the gems of the *Calendar*. But his musicianly efforts went further. The metres of which we have just spoken constitute only half of those used in his eclogues. They form its regular, lofty portion, which is based on syllabism. Another portion is rudely designed, in popular metres which follow no law save that of the four accentual beats. In the last analysis this part of the poem derives, by way of Chaucer disfigured by the changes in the language, from the alliterative verse of the Anglo-Saxons.

To these stylistic and metrical innovations Spenser added the art of composition. The reader of to-day [illegible] the thread which connects hi[illegible] into a single poem is [illegible] pride to have found, [illegible] moderns, a way of forming eclogues i[illegible] harmonious whole, each of them corresponding to a month in the year and having a certain more or less apparent fitness to its appropriate atmosphere and season. Some of the shepherds change, but others reappear, especially Colin Clout, about whom they centre, in whom the poet paints himself, and who returns at regular intervals to utter his amorous sighs. The principles of unity and of variety are skilfully blended, the rude eclogues alternating with those loftier in tone. The alternation is more deliberate than that of dignified and homely scenes on the stage, but it obeys the same law. We may smile at the meticulous symmetry of the *Calendar* even in minute details. The excessive number of its calculated consonances and discords astonishes rather than charms us to-day, but these artistic exaggerations were greeted with transports of joy at a time when the still formless state of poetry made the demand for artistry urgent

As compared with these external innovations, the matter of the eclogues is less important. They are found to include three principal themes, for which Spenser was unashamedly inspired by his predecessors—love, poetry, and religion He owes so much to his forerunners, especially Mantuanus and Marot, that there is a temptation to overlook the personal and even autobiographical element which does nevertheless exist in his imitations.

The love which Colin Clout, Spenser's pastoral name for himself, bears to the scornful Rosalind, the poet's indignation when the muse is neglected and the singer reduced to misery, his Puritanic velleities, leading him to condemn the idle and

proud prelates, the Anglican shepherds who had turned to secular pleasures—all this has relation to Spenser's cares of the moment and to the trend of public opinion.

With its many allusions, some of them still clear, many others plain to contemporaries, *The Shepheard's Calendar* united, at the time of its appearance, the interest of its matter to the charm of its manner. For the first time an English poet seemed to triumph over his European rivals, and in the very *genre* which was generally attractive in the sixteenth century, in pastoral poetry.[1] Spenser marked the first score in the game of parallelism between England and antiquity or modern Italy, which the English critics were to pursue, all ready to acclaim the victory of their national champions. The merit of the poem is great; its date and circumstances turned it into a triumph. From the moment of its publication Spenser was the acknowledged national poet.

(*b*) THE HYMNS. 'MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE.'—At the same time his ambition grew. Like Virgil, he began with eclogues; like him he afterwards attempted the glorious enterprise of an epic. From pastoral he passed to chivalrous poetry. His *Calendar* was hardly finished when he was faced with a prospect of a courtier's life. He entered the household of the powerful Earl of Leicester, Elizabeth's favourite, and was admitted to the society of Philip Sidney, the earl's nephew. From this moment dates his first idea for *The Faerie Queene*, the great work of his life to which his other verses were no more than marginal scribblings.

But even in 1580, before the beginning of that sojourn in Ireland which he felt as a weary exile and which lasted until the end of his life, he had completed some characteristic verses which did not appear until later, when they had been more or less retouched. The essence of his philosophy is expressed in his hymns to Love and Beauty, composed, he tells us, 'in the greener times of my youth.' With his sensuous artist's nature, enamoured of beauty and continually in love, he was the true Pamphilus his friend Harvey called him, yet was tormented by a need for truth, tossed between paganism and Christianity, the Renascence and the Reformation; and he thought to reconcile his senses and his conscience by following Plato, who identified supreme beauty with good. He

[1] W. W. Greg, *Pastoral Poetry and Pastoral Drama . . . in England* (London, 1906), and H. Genouy, *L'Élément pastoral dans la poésie et dans le drame en Angleterre de 1579 à 1640* (Montpellier, 1928).

found that this reconciliation of his dream had even better than in *Phaedrus* and *The Banquet*, Marsilio Ficino, who christianized the spirit It was therefore with an ardent eloquence that magnificent verse the sublime dreams of the sopher as interpreted by his modern disciple. the civilizer of the world which he himself drew and ever since has maintained in harmony.

Spenser saw earthly beauty, and especially the woman, which inspires love, as the reflection and divine beauty, virtue rendered visible, the beam from lodged in a body and fashioning its fleshly habitatic marvellous palace:

> Therefore where-ever that thou doest behold
> A comely corpse, with beautie faire endewed
> Know this for certaine, that the same doth hold
> A beauteous soule, with faire conditions thewed;
> Fit to receive the seede of vertue strewed,
> For all that faire is, is by nature good,
> That is a sign to know the gentle blood

This exquisite belief reconciles contraries, makes pleasures of the eye into a school of perfection and love a moral law. By virtue of this faith Spenser ennobled all loves, gave his brush full leave to paint in fullest detail bodily charms of his heroines, and saw all the stirrings of own passion as impulses heavenwards. He became aware the danger of this doctrine only towards the end of his life when nearly all his verse had been written.

At about the same time as these exalted hymns, Spenser wrote a poem of quite another kind, a harsh satire in the form of a fable, to which he gave the name of *Mother Hubberd's Tale*. The reverse side of idealism is contempt for reality or discontent with it. Throughout his life Spenser was a morose judge of the society of his time, viewing it pessimistically. Dithyrambic eulogies of the incomparable Elizabeth are a screen for continuous denunciation of the mean intrigues of the court, the debased morals, the political corruption, the simony and inertia of the clergy, the decadence of the spirit of chivalry, and above all the neglect of letters and art. Spenser has a sort of artless faith in the golden age which he sees far behind him in an abolished past. The personal disappointments which this nervous and irritable poet suffered certainly contributed much to the blackness of

He was convinced that a poet has a right to one of the first places in a well-ordered society, that a sort of Prytaneum in which he would dwell remote from all material cares ought to exist for him, but he did not find great men and ministers disposed to satisfy his ambitions. His rancour gathered against Lord Burleigh, the great treasurer, the counsellor who more than any other had the queen's ear and who economically dispensed her favours and the powers she delegated.

Burleigh is hidden in the form of the Fox in the fable of the Ape and the Fox which constitutes *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, while the Ape is, at least sometimes, the Duke of Anjou, brother to Henry III of France and a candidate for the queen's hand. The poem was written when Elizabeth seemed to incline to this Catholic suitor, who was hated in her kingdom as a foreigner and a member of the royal family responsible for the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The Ape and the Fox, two brazen adventurers, are shown passing through Elizabethan society, having luck now with the clergy, now with the court. They take advantage of a day when the Lion—that is the monarch, Queen Elizabeth—sleeps to steal his crown. The Ape thereupon becomes king and the Fox prime minister, and their shameless tyranny prospers until the Lion awakes. Except gaiety and humour, the fable has all the merits of its *genre*. It reveals the poet's powers of observation and his vigour. The metre, which is deliberately rude, suits the satirical intention, and its harshness has that easy amplitude which Spenser evinces in his properly poetic work.

(*c*) THE 'COMPLAINTS.'—The same condemnation of the age recurs copiously in the *Complaints, containing sundrie small Poems of the World's Vanities*, published in 1591. *Mother Hubberd's Tale*, doubtless enlarged and retouched, figures here, but does not strike the dominant note of the collection, which is especially one of indignant or sorrowful eloquence. It is the 'discours fatal des choses mondaines,' which du Bellay recommended as essentially proper to lyricism. The total result is, truth to tell, lugubrious, in the spirit of the Middle Ages rather than of the Renascence, so monotonously sombre in colour as to recall the *Mirror for Magistrates*. The work is not wholly original. It includes translations—of Petrarch's *Visions*, of du Bellay's *Visions* and *Ruines de Rome*, of the *Culex* attributed to Virgil. In all the original poems there is pessimism, founded on the disappearance of

Undoubtedly they have much that is borrowed or reminiscent. The sighs which Spenser breathes often echo those of Petrarch and the Petrarchians; his indifferent and scornful fair, whose pity he long implores in vain, recalls the cruel ladies of tradition. But the poet's distinctive voice is heard in sonnets like the sixth, in which he rejoices in the maiden's prolonged resistance, as the index of her untouched heart never troubled by desire, and as the pledge of a chaste ardour which, once lit, will not be quenched. The same voice sounds in the sixty-seventh sonnet, though imitative of Tasso, in which he tells, in charmed surprise, of the sudden moving of this virginal heart which has been so timid and which, at the very moment when he deems it lost for ever, gives itself unreservedly to him and is happy to be captured.

The chastity of these sonnets is neither shyness nor reticence. In many of them the poet extols his mistress's beauty with a great sensual wealth of detail and colour, and does not conceal the ardour of his desires, even while he restrains their impatience (Sonnet 83).

Charming though they be, the *Amoretti* are equalled, if not surpassed, by others of the illustrious sonnet series of the Renascence. But the *Epithalamion* which is their conclusion has no equal. In amplitude and splendour it excels all other compositions of the same kind. Even antiquity produced no such poem, none which was unswelled by legends and yet carried so much sail. Its twenty-three stanzas, of from seventeen to nineteen lines, merely describe enthusiastically the whole of the poet's wedding-day, from the dawn of the sun which lit its glorious hours to the night which left the bride in her husband's arms. Each stanza frames a rite of the festival, and beneath the rich, ennobling mythological decoration, simple, homely circumstances are revealed of this wedding celebrated in a small Irish town on the 11th of June, 1594. This song of joy finds matter in abundant and melodious realism. The poet's genius does not need the rare and the subtle in order to reach beauty, for he knows that beauty has an inexhaustible spring in the common incidents which seem vulgar to other eyes. Never did his genius show its sovereign power as in the *Epithalamion*. The breath which fills each ample strophe and passes unabated through them all to the end, the clear light which floods each successive picture, and the fine classical structure of the whole poem, simple, luminous, and inevitable, make this ode Spenser's most perfect pro-

He would have escaped this neglect had he kept to the first title he had in mind, one much better fitted to indicate the character of his work—*Pageants*, that is decorative pictures, such rhythmic processions and rich spectacles as the Elizabethans loved passionately. His book is indeed nothing else than this, or rather all that makes its beauty consists of nothing else. But the men of his time thought themselves obliged to bring a moral lesson to the forefront. Already this tendency was more marked in the English than in continental nations. The English were beginning to take a national pride in their seriousness, as a quality which distinguished them from the southern peoples whom they considered more frivolous and dissolute than themselves. Spenser was the more inclined to this attitude because he wished to emulate Ariosto and counted on superior virtue to enable him to surpass *Orlando Furioso*. He therefore abandoned his *Pageants* and wrote a vast allegory in order 'to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline.' Like Ariosto, he created a fairylike chivalry, but he intended each of his knights to represent one of 'the xii private moral virtues, as Aristotle hath devised.' The poet does indeed admit that it would have been better if his message had been 'delivered plainly in way of precepts,' but he makes concession to 'the use of these days, seeing all things accounted by their showes, and nothing esteemed of, that is not delightful and pleasing to commune sence.'

It must be acknowledged that in his first two books his aim of edification is sufficiently fulfilled. The allegory is continuous and the moral constantly to the fore. But in the later books both are obscured and the romance is dominant. Spenser is no longer on a higher plane than Ariosto, but walks beside him. Neither as an allegorist nor as a writer of romance does he excel, but as the showman of pageants he is incomparable.

He lacks, first, the simple restrained line of a good allegorist. He had not the central idea, the ardent passion, or the unity of design which are essential conditions of a powerful and effective allegory. Instead of unity he has complication. His characters are created for more than one purpose, are both moral and historical personages. His King Arthur, in love with the Fairy Queen, is Magnificence—the supreme virtue which, according to Aristotle, includes all others—and he is also the symbol for divine grace; moreover, he suggests Leicester, Elizabeth's favourite. Artegall is Justice incarnate

l stands at the same time for the severe Lord Grey of Wilton whom Spenser was secretary in Ireland. The allegorical ry is thus both moral and political. In the first book the ventures of the Red Cross Knight represent, in turn or multaneously, the Christian soul in quest of truth, the alternaes offered by Protestantism and Catholicism, and the rances and lapses of faith in the sixteenth century. At es the reader in search of absolute comprehension and erpretation is bewildered and feels lost. He is reassured y when he tells himself that to understand is not necessary, gaze is enough.

Sometimes the allegories are obscure even in detail, and eal themselves as puerile when too closely examined. e masque of Cupid, played in the palace of the enchanter sirane, is very beautiful to the eye. Yet it owes its place an inconsistency, for while it is intended to show the ills ich Cupid inflicts on his victims, in the plot it occurs at the ler of a lewd magician who wishes to win the love of a fair otive. The poet is interested not by the significant, but by : picturesque, and often, when his didacticism is most in evince, he seems himself to nod. He declaims platitudes in sonous tones; he is sententious, sometimes frankly tautological

[illegible]

th poignant force he represents the tragedy of despair [illegible]

[illegible]

the exquisite only here and there. Spenser, when he wished create characters, even in a romance, was impeded by his egory, which asked not for living beings, but for embodied stractions. To write a romance was not to fulfil his engagents. He is conscious of this fact and weakened and conained thereby. Yet he enjoys recounting the strange [illegible]

pantomimic, thrown into relief with incomparable vigour, and it produces the effect of a nightmare, but it does not suggest jealousy with any precision. It might apply to insomnia induced by any cause—fever, nightmare, or toothache. The wonder is in the vision itself and the strength with which it is impressed on the reader's imagination.

The whole of *The Faerie Queene* is full of these suggestions. Where usually a poet would throw a passing hint, adopt a traditional way of speech or merely a metaphor, Spenser insists so that he tends to produce reality. He does not, like others, like Ronsard, content himself with declaring that he is the nursling of the Muses, or saying that it has been granted him to see, in the wood beside the spring, the daughters of Memory and the Graces. He tells us the exact spot at which he has been allowed to contemplate them, and shows them dancing, embodied as a painter could make them. In his verses they exist as substantially as the poet who has the vision (VI. x. 5–30).

He borrows the idea or subject of his pictures from everywhere, from books as from paintings and pageants and the scenes on the stage of his time. He rejects no poetic source. We find in him reminiscences of Homer, Lucretius, Virgil, and Ovid, Guillaume de Lorris, Chaucer, Langland, Lydgate, and Malory, Stephen Hawes and Sackville, Ariosto and Tasso—to cite only the chief of his creditors. Hence the rich diversity of his illuminations, a whole which has elements so disparate that we are driven to ask how his poem could blend and attain to a sort of unity. Happily the fusion had already been made, and had produced the richest and most complex spectacle of the time, the masque, which was the father of the ballet dear to Louis XIV and the ancestor of the opera, which combined mythology, allegory, and fairy-tale and was accompanied by symbolical dances and music. Much honoured in Spenser's day, it reached its climax after his death, under James I. Spenser occupies a transitional place in the history of the masque. His poem was inspired by the masques he had seen, but itself supplied one of the richest models and, above all, one of the strongest imaginative stimulants to the magnificent masques which came after him.

The Faerie Queene may be said to have fixed in a descriptive poem the masques of the English Renascence, thus reviving and perpetuating the ephemeral enchantment of those spectacles. Spenser keeps the sumptuous and changing scenery of the

masters, for he would have feared to make his story fragment-ary by this alexandrine line, of which the majestic length always suggests a conclusion, marking the end of each stanza and isolating it. But he liked the architectural effect of the long *finale* in his descriptions, and the expanded stanza corresponded to his wonted phrasing, to the long periods habitual to him, as to his contemporaries, even in prose. His stanza was the mould natural to his syntax and his thought. Although it was used by many poets after him, and by some of the greatest—Thomson, Byron, Shelley, Keats—it never seems to adapt itself as well to their tones as to his, for the moderns have a mode of thought and expression which is briefer, more analytical, and more disjointed than Spenser's. The poet of to-day is shorter in the wind. His breath fills less easily and less constantly the spacious interior of this harmoniously proportioned urn.

Spenser's metre, deliberately lengthened and weighted, is so ample and so slow that its majesty, like that of a deep, evenly flowing river, compensates for the qualities it has lost. The very fact that the poem is written in stanzas and all in this measure has important consequences. We hear music which has slowed down, music with a perpetually recurring measure which .ulls our intellect and little by little leads us away from the real world into another, a world of order and harmony where this stanza seems to be the natural rhythm. It keeps time in fairyland. It measures the hours in the region of nowhere, the kingdom of illusion. It has a hypnotic effect, induces a slumber in which the things of life are remote and we are in communion only with the poet's pictures. Every movement is regulated by it and obeys its laws, as though it were a metronome by which all the characters timed their acts and words. Never hurried, eternally reborn, its empire is that of a continuous sound in nature, as of the winds or the sea. No single stanza read separately can give an idea of the immense part which the stanza plays in this poem, in which each one inherits the cumulative force of all its predecessors. From his perception that they are on one pattern, the reader is brought to feel every individual stanza to be essential to the general order, and this unconscious recognition of an inevitability of form gives added value to the contents of the verses.

It is here and in his pictures that Spenser is marvellous. His glory must not be established on the less solid elements of

peninsula. His lyrical verse is scattered among such collections of the period as *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises* (1576) and does not lack grace and facility. He exemplifies the taste for letters which reigned in the court circle and which might be found in a dissolute fop like himself as well as in a daring adventurer like Raleigh, or in Sidney, the mirror of perfect chivalry. Beside the court poets, professional men of letters were ranged—Lyly who dedicated his *Euphues* to Oxford, Spenser who headed his *Calendar* with Sidney's name and addressed the preface of his *Faerie Queene* to Raleigh. The court and its neighbourhood were the first home of the Renascence.

Oxford was Sidney's enemy. Sir Edward Dyer, famous in his own time for his lost elegies, and Fulke Greville, Lord Brooke (1554–1628),[1] were his most intimate and constant friends. Fulke Greville wrote his verses in his youth, although most of them did not appear until after his death. He w Sidney's first biographer. Thoughtful and sententious, great admirer of Elizabeth, whose royal greatness he cel brated and whose personal praises he sang in his *Coelica* Fulke Greville's work includes beautiful imaginative lines anc others which have a noble but slightly starched and superannuated grace. The cast of his mind made him a man of the period of *Euphues* and *Arcadia*. His Myra, who bathed,

Washing the waters with her beauties white,

is the sister of Sidney's Philoclea.

[1] *Certain Learned and Elegant Works Written in his Youth and Familiar Exercise with Sir Philip Sidney* (1633); *Life of Sidney* (published 1652); *Remains* (poems on the monarchy and on religion: 1670); *Complete Works*, published by Grosart, 4 vols. (1870); *Caelica*, ed. by U. Ellis-Fermor (1937).

:HAPTER III

POETRY FROM 1590 TO 1625

1. *Elizabethan Poetry from 1590 to 1603.*[1]—Outside the theatre, almost all the literature of the Elizabethan period properly so called, that is down to 1603, derived from Lyly, Sidney, and Spenser. Romances bore the imprint of *Euphues* and *Arcadia* in turn or simultaneously. Pastorals imitated from Spenser or Sidney abounded. *Astrophel and Stella*, from the moment of its publication, provoked a whole flowering season of sonnets. The successive appearance, about 1590, of Sidney's sonnets and *Arcadia*, and of the first books of *The Faerie Queene*, was the signal for an intense literary activity. It was .en that a whole generation born some ten years after penser entered the arena of letters. The poetry alone shows uch a literary ferment as makes very difficult the task of presenting the new works methodically. Doubtless drama attracted the writers who were most vital and energetic, but the majority of them turned from time to time to pure poetr as a relaxation, and wrote verses in the fashionable poeti genres. We are thus led to follow *genres* rather than ind viduals. First, however, we must deal with the drama v works of two poets whose contribution to the volumino slight and unimportant Their production continued i the next century, but the date of their birth and the atmosp in which their talent was formed make them true E thans. They are Daniel and Drayton

Each of them produced one of the longest poems of the period, *The Faerie Queene* excepted. The American critic Lowell could call Daniel's *Civil Wars* and Drayton's *Polyolbion* the megalosaurus and plesiosaurus of the Renascence. These poets express, more directly than Spenser, their patriotic feeling, which is less troubled than his by the dream of a golden age or by hostility to the present. They survive only in a few pages of verse and a few short poems, but their figures are distinct and can be traced in every part of the considerable body of their works.

[1] — —. Schelling, *English Literature during the Lifetime of Shakespeare* (1910)

He therefore chose no period of glory for his theme, but told in narrative the story which was at this moment being dramatized, which Shakespeare was taking for the subject of plays, the history of the bloodthirsty struggle between the houses of Lancaster and York. The eight cantos of Daniel's *Civil Wars,* published from 1595 to 1609, treat of the misfortunes of England from the reign of Richard II until the break between Warwick and Edward IV, and, in spite of their seven to eight thousand lines, they leave the tale unfinished. It corresponds exactly to the Shakespearian 'histories,' *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, and the two first parts of *Henry VI*, sometimes following them and sometimes going ahead of them. Daniel's exposition is more accurate, cool and dignified than the plays, which bring on to the stage a succession of animated pictures by turns chivalrous and comic, arbitrary alike in their omissions and additions. It is strange to read Daniel's calm stanzas, and to remember the tumultuous dramas in which the same stories are told, or Spenser's romantic transfiguration of the national annals. Daniel's clear and expressed intention is to transfigure nothing:

I versify the truth, not poetize.

Unfortunately he poetizes all too little. Conscientiously he keeps pace with facts, adding fictions only very rarely. It is remarkable that his fictions have the same turn as in the pseudo-classical epics. They are inserted deliberately as ornaments, intellectual relaxations, for instance the mythological origin he fabricates for printing and artillery, two ill-omened inventions which Nemesis orders Pandora to supply.

This element of the marvellous is exceptional in Daniel's work. If his facts are dull, so much the worse; if dramatic, so much the better. Nor does he seek to interest by penetrating or lively portrayal of character. His calm narrative does scant justice to such outstanding personalities as the wild Margaret of Anjou, or to scenes of violence like Jack Cade's rebellion. If there is fairly lifelike psychology in his story of the first interviews between Edward IV and Lady Elizabeth Grey, it probably is that the author is inspired by the staging of this incident in *Henry VI*. The best part of his poem, apart from a few vigorous stories, consists in the moral reflections arising out of his patriotism as it is wounded by his own story of atrocious intestine conflict.

On the whole this long poem is a mistake. The careful and

of even, rather timid purity, it has warmth and dash, flights and falls.

He was born in 1563, one year after Daniel and one year before Shakespeare, in Shakespeare's Warwickshire, which lies at the heart of England. He was brought up on the borders of the Forest of Arden, on the banks of the Ankor:

> Fair Arden, thou my Tempe art alone,
> And thou, sweet Ankor, art my Helicon.

He cherished poetic ambitions in his first youth, for he tells us that at ten years old he implored his guardian, 'clasping my slender arms about his thigh,' to make him a poet, and the guardian smilingly set him to read Mantuanus and Virgil, while a minstrel of Polesworth Castle, where he was page, introduced him to popular songs and ballads. It is not known whether he were ever at a university, and his poetic production began late. He made his real beginning with *Idea, the Shepherd's Garland* (1593), which was inspired by Spenser, but is neither archaic nor moralizing. Disguised as Roland, Drayton sings the praises of Beta, or Queen Elizabeth, and bewails in turn, the vanished heroes of England and the rejection of his suit by his hard-hearted mistress Idea. In 1594 he published his first sonnets with the title *Ideas Mirrour.* His eclogues and his sonnets reappeared in several successive editions, always with corrections and additions, a fate shared by most of his verses, for he was perpetually in quest of change.

In 1596 he had turned to historical poetry and he wrote his *Mortimeriados*, which he retouched and republished in 1603 under the title of *The Barons' War*. In moments snatched from this history he wrote *England's Heroical Epistles* (1597).

Upon the death of Elizabeth he acclaimed the advent of James I, the lettered king, of whom, after the reign of the parsimonious queen, writers expected a sort of age of gold. Drayton was soon disappointed, and, abandoning the court, he wrote two obscure and mediocre satires, *The Owl* (1604) and *The Man in the Moon* (1605), then certain odes far superior to his satires (1606).

Thereafter he concentrated on his immense *Polyolbion*, which he planned before 1598 and of which the first eighteen cantos appeared in 1613, the twelve others in 1622. In 1627, when he was growing old, he produced a collection which is full of freshness and includes his *Nymphidia* and his *Quest of*

Cynthia, and in 1631 he published *The Muses Elizium*. He died in this year at the age of sixty-eight.

The whole of his very diverse work shows an abundant fancy, active and animated, but not subtle. He versifies with extreme facility. Reading certain of his poems, for instance the ode on the battle of Agincourt, we are carried away by the martial rhythm, although the substance is thin and the thought as banal as in Laurence Minot's songs. Drayton's style has vigour and colour without correctness. He cares for colour more than for line. His amorphous sentences, and his periods connected by relatives at once vague and heavy, are stumbling-blocks to the reader, who follows him with some difficulty. There are striking, energetic words, but hardly a stanza has its rightful balance. This poet does not err from lack of industry or because he improvises hastily, for never were verses more courageously retouched than his. He went so far as to rewrite the whole of his *Mortimeriados*, substituting the *ottava rima* for its original seven-lined stanza. The benefit of such alterations is not invariably evident, but he always accounted for them to himself by particular reasons.

It pleased him to be independent, an innovator in such matters. He wrote his immense *Polyolbion* in alexandrines,

[illegible]

English contains six, and is thus longer, slower, and heavier. The monotony caused by the median caesura is the more wearisome. Drayton's example was not followed. Mr. Elton, the most sympathetic of his critics, quaintly defines the effect produced: 'It has a kind of heavy dignity, like a Lord Mayor's coach.'

Drayton was better inspired when he used the decasyllabic couplet in many of his poems, for instance in his *Heroical*

[illegible]

tastes very clearly.

His work has more than one analogy with that of William Dunbar—poverty of thought and commonplace feeling, but swing and go and a rhythm which carries the reader along

All that survives of Drayton in anthologies is some short poems—the martial ballad to the glory of Agincourt and the ardent stanzas on the voyage to Virginia—and *Nymphidia*, that amusing fantasia in which he relates the great quarrel which brought Oberon and the knight Pigwiggen to blows for love of Queen Mab. Here he acknowledges a debt to Chaucer, who sang of Sir Thopas, and to Rabelais, who celebrated Pantagruel; but forgets Shakespeare, who in *Midsummer Night's Dream* celebrated the fairy queen and called lilliputian elves to life. He derives his tone and his form from Chaucer. He repeats the very stanza of *Sir Thopas—aaabcccb*, eigh syllabled separated by six-syllabled (*b*) lines, these last wit feminine rhymes. He parodies the chivalry and tournament which Spenser sang in *The Faerie Queene*, and he remember Orlando's fury in the madness of his Oberon. But thes literary reminiscences are easily carried by a fantasia which has no aim but to provoke laughter. Drayton's search is for the comic rather than the graceful, the grotesque rather than the poetic. He shows Oberon mad with jealousy, flying at every one he meets, armed with an acorn which he brandishes by the stalk, mistaking a wasp for Pigwiggen and a luminous worm for a devil. He hurls himself at a hive, smears himself with honey and wax, rides an ant who throws him into the mud, and climbs on to a molehill, whence he tumbles into a lake and is somewhat calmed by the water. Finally he makes a boat of his acorn and escapes. The episode is typical of the tone and character of this tiny children's epic.

Laughter dominates it, but in some other little poems Drayton's fancy, although never exquisite, is yet graceful and almost dreamy, for instance in his *Quest of Cynthia*, in which he represents himself as following the goddess through the country, where her divine steps have left charming vestiges, for many little flowers have opened beneath her feet. He reaches her at last, and the two decide to live together in love and innocence. Here Cynthia symbolizes nature. The theme might be that of a Lake poet, but it is clothed in Elizabethan fancy.

Drayton's long poems have the same qualities of energy and imagination as the short, but are clogged and petrified by his rebellious material. Where, to sustain his more ambitious work, he needed intellectual force and deliberate reflection, he disposed only of vivacity and fancy. This is true of his

Barons' Wars, a pendant to Daniel's *Civil Wars*. Like Daniel, Drayton wished to paint one of the tragic periods of

reign of Edward II and the barons' struggle against Queen Isabella's favourite, Mortimer, a theme which Marlowe had staged in *Edward II*. Less of a purist than Daniel, addicted to conceits, capable of more grandiose images, but afflicted with a confused syntax, Drayton is less inclined than he to moral reflection, but, having more fire, succeeds better in producing vigorous and brilliant pictures. He has some fine martial stanzas, and others, to describe the murder of Edward II, which are powerful, while those which paint the amours of

Hero and Leander. The poem has over Daniel's the further advantage that it confines itself to a subject which has unity. But its defect arises out of the poet's moral indecision. He is drawn to the different characters of his story in turn when they love or suffer, and disperses his sympathy with that of the reader. He seems to have no preferences and to aim at no conclusions, and the interest of his narrative suffers.

His *Heroical Epistles* (1597) may have been partly inspired by the success of Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*. But his chief model was the letters exchanged between the famous lovers of mythology in Ovid's *Heroides*. Drayton's patriotism led him similarly to present the famous characters of English history. .

letter to her lover

Fitzwalter; those

Prince to the Cou

Queen Katherine,

Cobham to her

Margaret, wife of Henry VI; Edward IV to his mistress, Jane Shore; Mary, queen of France and daughter of Henry VIII, to Suffolk; Surrey to Lady Geraldine; Dudley to Lady Jane Grey. As a means of bringing life back to history, dramatically as on the stage, the idea is ingenious, and it is proof of the appetite of the nation for everything taken from its annals. The psychological essay was also a happy one. Drayton is not without sense of character, although it is not strong and

penetrating enough in him to throw his personages into the relief which would have saved them from confusion and preserved this interesting poem against the assaults of time. More clearly than elsewhere we have here the impression that Drayton just misses success, that he all but has the talent necessary to a masterpiece, but that something lacking in his intellectual and artistic equipment holds him back on the the brink of triumph.

We come to the one of his works which by its size and the number of years he spent on it ranks first, his *Polyolbion*, in which his ardent patriotism finds vent better than anywhere else. Here he forsakes history for geography. He celebrates in fifteen thousand alexandrines the isle 'of many blessings' (Polyolbion), conducting the reader through all the counties of England, not by means of such a rapid catalogue of resources as that made by the author of the *Brut*, but by numerous detailed descriptions enriched by all the local legends.

The work is imposing because it is so greatly ambitious, and touching because through all difficulties and the inevitable monotony of his plan the poet is upheld by love for his native land. From Cornwall and Devon to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight; thence, by way of Salisbury and Bristol, to Wales and to the Midlands, Warwickshire, the poet's birthplace; then Oxford, London, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, through Suffolk and Norfolk, and through every county to the north, to Yorkshire in the east and to the lake country in the west, he pursues his way.

The erudite character of the poem is emphasized by the notes appended to its eighteen first cantos by the learned John Selden, heir to the glory of Camden the antiquary. But accuracy formed only half of Drayton's plan. He wished also to poetize. Hence the dualism curiously emphasized by Selden's initial note:

> To gentlewomen and their loves is consecrated all the wooing language, allusions to love passions and sweet embracements feigned by the Muse amongst hills and rivers. Whatsoever tastes of description, battle, story, abstruse antiquity, and (which my particular study caused me sometime remember) law of the kingdom, to the more severe reader.

It must be acknowledged that a puerile mythology decorates the poem. Every hill, every valley is personified. Every river, in particular, is endowed with life, turned into a nymph. The process is easy and unvaried; it is as though Boileau's Rhine 'à la barbe limoneuse' were multiplied a

hundredfold. There are no descriptions, in the modern sense, of natural features. Each stream and slope has a surprising memory replete with history or legend, and reproducing, as well as a passage of real history, the past of Brut's country, Albion.

What is astonishing is the untiring zest with which Drayton pursues a theme at once flat and extravagant, multiple and monotonous. In the districts which he knows more intimately, like his own county of Warwickshire, he stays to paint pictures which are both lively and fresh. His deer-hunt in the forest of Arden is often quoted. And even in the dullest passages he has some lines, written from the heart and frankly worded and turned, which awake nodding attention and interrupt the increasing impression of bad taste and the ridiculous.

this
as from
str ows,
by little

of the Coln,
Roman road
Street asking
ave occurred
on its banks and made a fertile corn-growing country into a sandy waste:

> At which the silent brook shrunk in his silver bed,
> And feign'd as he away would instantly have fled;
> Suspecting present speech might passed grief renew

> With these persuasive words, smooth Ver the Watling wan,
> Stroking her dusty face

At last the story is told, and:

> This said, the aged street sagg'd sadly on alone

1

The canto goes on to eulogize the situation of London and the wealth and activity of the great river port. It ends with a diatribe against the gentry, declaring them to be laz devoted to luxury and to be impoverishing their counti importing from abroad, at great cost, the articles necessa their extravagant and epicurean tastes.

This canto, neither better nor worse than the avei may be taken as typical. More than once it might prov laughter and ridicule, for the humanized rivers, roads, hills cut very strange figures, and there is something child fitted to childish minds, about the whole conception. I the spirit of the Renascence was, after all, youthful in extreme. The whole period is not exempt from a suspici of puerility, mingled with all that it had of the great and t sublime.

Drayton's was a mad enterprise. The game was lost befo it was begun. Yet his ardour, his fancy, his eccentricity, h flatness, his very bad taste, make his *Polyolbion* a characteristi product of his time.

(c) THE COLLECTIONS OF LYRICAL VERSE. THE SONGS.—Besides Daniel and Drayton, there were in the Elizabethan age dramatic authors who wrote a little verse as secondary to their plays, and also minor poets who followed one of the literary fashions of the moment. Certain *genres* were particularly in favour, and to note their characteristics will repay us better than to deal with each individual by himself.

In those days the works of single authors were less read than the collections in which some publisher arbitrarily brought together sets of verses, often of uncertain authorship. Here and there these books include the signature of a great lord or a famous poet, but usually the poems are signed only by initials and sometimes nothing indicates their authorship. Tottel's famous *Miscellany* had been followed by *The Paradyse of Daynty Devises* in 1576, *A Gorgious Gallery of Gallant Inventions* in 1578, and *A Handefull of Pleasant Delites* in 1584, and now came *The Phoenix Nest* in 1593, *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599, *England's Helicon*, *England's Parnassus*, and *Belvedere* in 1600, *A Poetical Rapsody* in 1602, and others. In almost ll these collections exquisite poems are elbowed by others vhich are mediocre or even deplorable; the worst rhymesters re associated with the true poets.

It was in these collections that some poets placed their best ork, like the prolific Nicholas Breton (1545?–1626), whose

engaging pastoral vein was never better displayed than in the *Helicon*, and Richard Barnfield (1564–1627), whose most charming little odes appeared in *The Passionate Pilgrim* and were long attributed to Shakespeare.

The shortest pieces, and especially the songs, are what is best in these collections.[1] The Elizabethan age cannot claim the song exclusively, for songs were made throughout the English Renascence. Songs are of all time and all countries. Yet they were perhaps never so copious, so various, and so winged as in this period. They best accomplished the blending of the genius of the people and the artistic sense awakened by humanism. The fusion was attempted in all *genres* but with very unequal success. In most of the long poems taste is shocked by frequent disparities. The reader of to-day is offended by the excess of disorder and of pedantry in turn. But in numerous songs and slight lyrical pieces artifice is so well wedded to nature that the two are hardly distinguishable. The rudeness or clumsiness of the popular muse has been penetrated by graceful refinements of vocabulary and a pliability of versification once unknown to her. The best examples have a perfection which is never recaptured.

And the song was everywhere, sung in halls and parlours, trolled along the roads. It was in towns and in the country, on the stage and in romances. It filled whole collections; some poets specialized in it, but here and there an excellent ditty was born on the lips of a fine lord or lady who never made another. England, destitute of the plastic arts, became the impassioned lover of song. She had her traditional airs, and she listened eagerly to those which reached her from abroad, especially from Italy. She translated foreign songs and took them to herself, transforming them and inspired by them to new endeavour. Most were love-songs, some very free and profane. But others were religious, and many purely fantastic. They were in every mood—grave, mocking, sentimental, cynical. They were sung to the accompaniment of virginals, the spinet of that day, or of flageolets or of the viola da gamba or the guitar. They were written by the greatest and by unknown poets. England, Merry England, was a nest of singing birds

[1] *Elizabethan Lyrics*, ed. Bullen (1885); *England's Helicon*, reprinted by Bullen (1887); Arber's *English Garner*, revised ed., 12 vols (1903); *Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, ed. Saintsbury; *English Madrigal Verse, 1588–1632*, ed Fellowes (Oxford, 1920) See J. Erskine, *The Elizabethan Lyric* (1903), Saintsbury, *A History of Elizabethan Literature*; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. iv, Chap. VI; G. Bontoux, *La Chanson en Angleterre au temps d'Elizabeth* (1935).

Spenser inserted some very beautiful, slightly over-elaborated songs in his *Shepheard's Calendar*. His natural richness and loftiness led him to make of the song a little ode, if not such a magnificent ode as *The Epithalamion*. Sidney kept nearer to the song properly so called, of which some specimens, very full of life, follow his sonnets, the first with the refrain, 'To you, to you, all song of praise is due,' and his nocturnes, 'Only Joy! Now here you are,' and 'Who is it that this dark night?' He is less happy in the large number of songs scattered through his *Arcadia*. The most popular of his songs is *The Dirge of Love*, 'Ring out your bells!' Many are bold, passionate songs, not without a fantastic element which is sometimes exquisite, and nearly always they have a catching refrain.

The author of *Tamburlaine* and *Dr. Faustus* laid his sonorous trumpet aside one day to play a pastoral air on a reed-pipe. He sang the shepherd's call to the shepherdess, 'Come, live with me and be my love,' and Raleigh answered for the girl with a refusal, 'If all the world and love were young.'

These are true and charming songs. But the period was not satisfied with a few scattered airs, and there were whole collections which included verse and music. One of the first in date was made by William Byrd, gentleman of the Chapel Royal, who in 1587–8 published his *Psalms, Sonnets, and Songs of Sadness and Piety*, a simple, lucid, and pleasant miscellany although one without much poetry. Its light songs are imitated or translated from the Italian.

Much warmer in tone, richer in imagery, and more effeminate and languorous is the collection of Nicholas Yonge, *Musica Transalpina* (1588), in which the Italian note sounds yet more clearly. Yonge was a merchant whose trade brought him into touch with Italy. He or the nameless gentleman who supplied him with his translations was so much under Italian influence that he imitated even the terminations of metrical lines in that language and ended almost all his own with feminine rhymes. Here and there something turgid or banal or a richness which is slightly common spoils this curious collection.

Something fundamentally commonplace and a commonplace formal correctness also mar John Dowland's three *Books of Songs or Airs* which appeared in 1597, 1600, and 1603. A musician of repute, John Dowland, about 1580, visited France, 'a nation furnished with great variety of music.' Then, having

acquired, he says, a surer judgment, he made a stay in Germany and in Italy, where he was much appreciated, and afterwards in Denmark. In 1597 he returned to England and gave lessons on the lute. The airs in his books are, except for a few well-turned pieces, better than their verses.

Thomas Campion's four *Books of Airs*, published from 1601 to 1613, are of far greater value. This doctor of medicine, whose distraction was music, was a true poet. He turned critic and attacked rhymed verse, at which he excelled, in order to defend measured metres modelled on antiquity. In his *Books of Airs*, where he fortunately follows the national tradition, he protests against the earlier collections. He will

turns simple and strange, ancient and modern, sensual and passionate, bacchic and pious, worldly and rustic. Their form and matter are of every kind, but in all the rhythm is excellent and the language pleasant.

Some of Campion's most graceful songs occur not in his collections, but in his masques. The most exquisite songs of all were to be heard on the stage, and in order to cull them nearly every comedy and romantic play of the age must be searched.

Some on mythological themes, pretty but a little missing

Campaspe played,' 'O yes, O yes, if any maid.' Many very pleasing songs occur in George Peele's *Arraignment of Paris*. The best of the songs of Robert Greene and of Lodge are, however, in their romances, that lovely cradle-song 'Weepe not, my wanton' in Greene's *Menaphon*, and the charming madrigal 'Love in my bosom like a bee' in Lodge's *Rosalinde*.

The songs with which Shakespeare has sown his work are the most original and spontaneous of all and the richest in impressions of nature. A fresh and rustic realism runs through more than one of them—the contrasted notes of the cuckoo and the owl in 'When daisies pied' in *Love's Labour's Lost*, the song of Amiens on ingratitude in *As You Like It*, with its evocation of the keen-toothed winter wind and the waters warped by frost, or, in the same play, the page's song, its anacreontic moral the fresher for being trilled among green

cornfields and English acres of rye, or again the vagrant's song which Autolycus sings full-throatedly in *Winter's Tale* as he tramps the long English roads—'When daffodils begin to peer,' and the white sheet is 'bleaching on the hedge' and 'the sweet birds, O how they sing!'

There are also the purely fantastic songs which still borrow much from nature: the cradle-song in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, banishing the 'spotted snakes, with double tongue,' the 'thorny hedgehogs,' and the 'newts and blind-worms' from the bank where Titania sleeps; Ariel's, who lies 'in a cowslip's bell' and flies 'on the bat's back'; his call to the fairies:

> Come unto these yellow sands,
> And then take hands,

and his wonderful song of the sea-change suffered by Ferdinand's father, 'full fathom five' beneath the waters.

There are the short, light songs of feeling: that which tells of the birth of love, 'Tell me where is fancy bred,' while Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice* chooses the casket; Balthazar's song on the inconstancy of men in *Much Ado about Nothing*, 'Sigh no more, ladies'; and the song to wh poor, forsaken Mariana listens in *Measure for Measure*, 'Ta O take those lips away.'

A few are more ambitious, like the dirge in *Cymbeline* ov Imogen's body, with its resignation to death which comes all, and finishes 'joy and moan.'

But the list is inexhaustible. Shakespeare's many songs car not even be classified. Most of them were born of a particu lar occasion and are embedded in a scene whence they canno be taken without injury—Desdemona's willow song, Ophelia's mad song, Iago's drinking song, the ironical snatches sung by the fool in *King Lear*, and the incantations of the witches in *Macbeth*, not to mention Falstaff's hummings and those of the gravedigger in *Hamlet*, or the ribald airs of Pandarus with their vil reek.

These songs have been collected, even translated with some uccess, in a single volume,[1] but as a rule they are not intended be separated from the scene in which they take flight. By emselves, they lose their atmosphere with their occasion. any are frail as butterflies' wings, and at a touch the gold st which is their sparkle falls away from them.

Their rhythm is as various as their meaning. Some are all

[1] Into French, by Maurice Bouchor (1896).

sailed the perilous seas of love, and in the thirty-second and fifty-third, where all the rivers of England are humbled before that sweet stream Ankor on whose banks Idea dwells.

Another frequent characteristic of Drayton is his dramatic sense. His sonnets enclose on occasion small scenes, for instance the second, in which an inquiry into the murder of his heart is instituted, or the fifty-ninth, in which he and Love quote proverbs against each other. In this genre Drayton produced the most dramatic of sonnets, his sixty-first, in which he bids his mistress a bitter farewell, promising to forget her for ever, and then suddenly, while he grasps her hand to take leave of her, addresses to her the words by which they will will doubtless be reconciled.

On the whole, *Idea* is an easily, carelessly constructed work, lacking unity but in no way inert, and with a dash and a rude bravery of style which give it value.

The loss of all the collection we have just mentioned, and also of Fletcher's *Lycia*, Thomas Watson's *Teares of Fancy*, the unsigned *Zepheria*, Percy's *Coelia*, Willoughby's *Avisa*, the *Alcilia* of J. C., Griffin's *Fidessa*, Lynch's *Diella*, and Smith's *Chloris* would hardly impoverish poetry. They may be summed up as imitations, if not mere translations, or else they are experiments in style and in conceits. But three works, signed by great names, are more beautiful than any of the others and bear many marks of sincerity, that is of a direct relation to life and their authors. They have suffered from mediocre neighbours, and their few inevitable, superficial resemblances to these, have caused some recent critics to condemn them as tainted by the same unreality and produced by the same rhetoric. They are Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Spenser's *Amoretti*, and Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. That lofty and deep natures should have been superior to others even in sonnets is not surprising. It would seem that these true poets, with all the gamut of poetic forms at their disposal, had recourse to the sonnet when they wished to express their intimate feelings, and thus used it in conformity with its origin and for its proper purpose, not to make play with a fiction unconnected with their real life. The impression of sincerity is most simply explained by supposing that the writers were sincere, and it happens also that the few facts revealed by their sonnets are in strict agreement with the little known about their lives.

Is this to say that these sonneteers have not common ground

with their forerunners? Far from it. They are l
their exaltation, by the fact that for thousands of
have repeated the same words and gestures and l
times been deceived into believing that they used
Moreover, all poets from the times of Petrarch s
idealism which was their philosophy. Platonic s
especially as it helped them to deify their mistress's
make a virtue of their desire, and assure eternal life a
their verses and to the lady of their choice, made its w
all their minds. This is not to say that they were, p
speaking, imitators, but that they lived in a co
atmosphere.

Moreover, their wish to offer worthy jewels to the c
of their love led all the sonneteers to refine alike, and s
times, when the greatest of them dived for pearls, they bro
up the gems they had admired in others. Yet not only
their imagination, but also in their passion, there is a vivify
and renewing force. Even their repetitions are spoken in
new voice which is their own. Neither Petrarch, nor Ronsar
nor the most famous of the Italian and French sonneteer
could take the place of these English sonneteers, Sidney
Spenser, and Shakespeare. The individuality of a grea
sonneteer is as distinct as that of any other great writer.
In him the part of convention is slight and transparent and his true figure shines through it.

We have already spoken of the sonnets of Sidney and Spenser which are at the very heart of their poetic work. Shakespeare's sonnets are in different case, for they were written in moments snatched from work for the theatre.[1] His unequal ollection, spoilt in more than one place by excessive subtlety, tained by shadows which the most attentive searchlight s not entirely dissipated, is yet the casket which encloses e most precious pearls of Elizabethan lyricism, some of m unsurpassed by any lyricism. The formidable efforts to educe the exact history of the poet's heart from his sonnets and the publisher's mysterious dedication, and the conflict of theories resultant on this investigation, must not be allowed to conceal either the absolute beauty of the verses or the clear lines of the drama of feeling they trace. Shakespeare tells of his fervent love for a young man of high birth whose beauty and nobility he celebrates. He devotes himself to him whole-heartedly, finds in him his joy and his

[1] Doubtless between 1594 and 1602. Published 1609. Modern edition by T. G. Tucker (Cambridge University Press, 1924).

consolation for all the misery of life. He also expresses the agony of his love for a capricious and fickle married woman who deceives him with his friend. To that friend he is indulgent to the point of forgiveness, but for the woman he feels anger gradually increasing to hate.

The finest, most poignant, and most passionate sonnets are those in which he gives himself, with all his love and his genius, to the young man who dazzles him even after he has been betrayed by him. The profound pathos is thrown into relief by the rare beauty of the images and the style, and by the perfection of the versification, which has a subtle melody never to be surpassed. Music is not inherent in the pattern of the sonnet, or rather in the fourteen-lined poem, three quatrains with distinct rhymes followed by a distich, a form which is less elaborate than the Petrarchian. But its looseness is redeemed by the infinite care with which the poet caresses words and sounds. Only the best sonnets of Milton attain to the supreme beauty of the best written by Shakespeare, and their themes and effects are entirely different.

(*e*) Erotic Italianism. The Licentious Poets.—Feared and denounced though it was by Puritans like Ascham, Italian voluptuousness was still seductive to poets. Its traces are everywhere, in the ardour of many sonnets and songs, in the warm colouring of more than one such historical picture as Drayton's *Barons' War*, and even in poems like Spenser's which have a very evident moral tendency. The most beautiful passages of *The Faerie Queene* are impregnated with it. Yet Spenser was tenaciously fighting the licentiousness of the Italian muse, and his work is justly renowned for its purity and lofty tone as compared with that of more than one of his great contemporaries who were less impervious than he to the charms of the Mediterranean Circe. Marlowe and Shakespeare were among these. Under the influence of the verses and *novelle* of Italy, a sensual, lascivious poetry flourished in England, and was apt to provide libertine fine gentlemen and courtesans with their daily reading. These writings match the daring mythological paintings which the sixteenth-century artists alternated with religious pictures. The moralists had good cause to be scandalized when they listened to such stories as Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* or Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, not to mention John Marston's *Pigmalion* and other analogous productions of the time.

ınd took to a milk diet. In spite of some inevitable
isms, Musaeus wrote an exquisite poem, simple in
short and yet complete and harmonious, very pure
ı it celebrates ardent youthful love. In it Hero is
in suddenly awakened to love, Leander the adolescent
ie by his first passion The idea of the final catas-
broods over the whole work, imparting melancholy
the description of the lovers' bliss. Marot followed
ek poet exactly when he wished to relate the beautiful
the French, adding only that seeming artlessness
is style communicates to all his subjects. There is
ıo better method.

Iarlowe did not wish to translate. His intention was
e his plot with all the wealth of his imagination and
rein also to satire and irony The tragic end of the

e and natural. Although there is no nuptial rite,
no sin. But in Marlowe, the atheist and libertine,
of sin does not spring from piety, but is present
he uses his poem to run counter to the beliefs of his
d because it amuses him to defy the moral sense of
bout him. The provocation has a racy turn and
es changes the pure story into a fabliau. Marlowe
unmask the unconscious hypocrisies of his hero, even

ly beauty and the gratuitous introduction of forbidden

n before 1593, when Marlowe died; not completed. Published in
Chapman's continuation; another edition in that year with a sequel
. See Chabalier, *Héro et Léandre* (Paris, 1911)

practices into the tragic idyll. We are shown Neptune in love with handsome Leander and pursuing him beneath the waters. All this medley makes *Hero and Leander* a composite and barbarous work, and it is impossible to understand Swinburne's praise of it: 'That poem stands out alone amid all the wide and wild poetic wealth of its teeming and turbulent age, as might a small shrine of Parian sculpture amid the rank splendour of a tropic jungle.'

Fundamentally nothing could be less Greek. Rather we have here an extravagant Ovid, a demoralized Spenser. Yet how restrained and classical the portrait of the Spenserian Belphoebe seems beside Marlowe's heroine, dressed by his unbridled fancy as a young priestess of Venus! The strangeness of her clothing is extraordinary—her lawn mantle, 'the lining purple silk, with gilt stars drawn,' her wide green sleeves, her blood-stained blue kirtle, her myrtle wreath whence falls a veil of artificial flowers and leaves, her pebble necklace.

> Buskins of shells, all silver'd, usèd she,
> And branch'd with blushing coral to the knee;
> Where sparrows perch'd, of hollow pearl and gold,
> Such as the world would wonder to behold:
> Those with sweet water oft her handmaid fills,
> Which, as she went, would cherup through the bills.

Besides all this prettiness there are conceits: the artificial flowers of the veil are so well imitated as to deceive, and men 'would praise the sweet smell as she past,' and they felt the exhalations of her breath; bees also are taken in, seek honey in the veil, 'and, beat from thence, have lighted there again.' Even worse than all this are the red spots on Hero's skirt, 'made with the blood of wretched lovers slain,' doubtless for the sake of the amiable girl!

In manner Marlowe here comes very near the prettinesses and curiosities of the *Arcadia*. Elsewhere, by the way he makes his hero and heroine think, act, and speak, he recalls one of Chaucer's ribald tales or he anticipates Swift's cynicism. But always there is an underlying sensuality derived from Ariosto or even from Aretino. It is painful to see this graceful and pure theme turned into a half-satirical, half-aphrodisiac tale. Marlowe's poem is astounding by the heavy and extravagant richness of its frame as by the highly flavoured coarseness of its details.

And yet it has merits which partly explain the dithyrambic praise accorded to it. It is the work of a true poet who over-

d clear although he does not always keep free of the ty of his time, who handles words and images with ng decision and energy in a language which has with- ;me better than that of any other man of his century. er, Marlowe's irreverence is not uninterrupted; here ;re he is unreservedly on the side of the lovers; he is of sincere passion as well as of cynicism. It was in one

:nds lamenting that this poet was stopped in mid-career. alent shines luminously when his verses are compared ose of the poets who took over his task, and not only ! the mediocre rhymester called Petowe, who seems to en entirely ignorant of the Greek legend and who trans- *Hero and Leander* into a chivalrous romance. Petowe's loved by the king of her country, rejects him, and is :o prison, to stay there until a knight shall defend iour victoriously in the lists. Leander, nameless and :d, appears as her champion, triumphs and claims her, : is faithful and refuses him until she sees his face, pon the two live happy ever after. There is here no

George Chapman, afterwards famous for his transla- Homer. Chapman knew Greek and the original poem, is as far removed from Marlowe as Marlowe is from s. He is the most unintelligible, the gloomiest, and the of the Elizabethans, and thereto as much a moralist owe is a cynic. He makes the death of the lovers iishment of their illicit love, and invents the heaviest ery for the purpose, introducing endless new episodes : restrained story. He fashions for Hero a new dress nakes Marlowe's seem simple The scarf he gives her s long to describe as the shield of Achilles and bears r symbols. He cannot refrain from introducing a 'eflection into the smallest descriptive detail If the puffet the swimmer's body, he says.

> And toss'd distress'd Leander, being in hell,
> As high as heaven: bliss not in height doth dwell

In many places he touches the lowest depth of absurdity to which the astonishingly unequal poetry of the Elizabethans could fall, one beneath any watery abyss into which poor Leander sank.

(2) SHAKESPEARE'S 'VENUS AND ADONIS' (1593) AND 'THE RAPE OF LUCRECE' (1594).—Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, which he calls 'the first heir of my invention,' was written at the same time as *Hero and Leander*. It was lovingly chiselled and was dedicated by the poet to the Earl of Southampton, his young and noble patron. Here again inspiration comes from a classical legend. Shakespeare has recourse to Ovid as Marlowe to Musaeus; he too ministers to the taste for licentious pictures and enfranchises himself from the exigencies of drama in order to follow his fancy.

The story is well known. Venus falls in love with the young Adonis, who cares only for hunting, and rejects her. In spite of her he goes back to his sport, is killed by the wild boar which is his quarry, and is metamorphosed into an anemone.

Shakespeare eliminates nearly all the mythology. A powerful instinct impels him towards reality. His goddess is a woman skilled at love-making and ravaged by passion, and in Adonis we already have the young sport-loving Englishman, annoyed and fretted by the enticements of a beautiful amorous courtesan whose sensuality is unbounded and who retains no prestige of divinity.

These realistic passions are framed by equally realistic pictures and episodes. The arguments of Venus are supported by the appearance of 'a breeding jennet' rushing out of a neighbouring copse and at once joined by Adonis's steed, who breaks his rein in order to go to her. The horse is painted with dry precision, as by an expert. Further, the goddess vividly describes boar-hunting and hare-hunting to the youth, he one an over-dangerous sport whence she would dissuade im, the other a safe amusement which she recommends. hese two specialized pictures are plainly drawn at first hand nd from observation, and the most touching lines of the poem ll of the agony of the 'timorous flying hare.'

It is, however, impossible not to recognize that the dominant te is struck by the voluptuous painting of the goddess's civious gestures and the complacent retailing of her glowing rds. Thus regarded, the poem is, from the merely artistic nt of view, a complete success. Shakespeare gives evidence ts stanzas of astonishing linguistic wealth and skill. He too

use he writes in stanzas, not, like Marlowe, in rhyming ts, his poem has less the turn of a narrative than *Hero eander*. It is pre-eminently a series of pictures. If entiousness of the two poems is about equal, that of peare has the advantage of dealing with a mythological and staging a heroine neither of which could be much ed. On the other hand, his eroticism is more elaborate s less dash and spontaneity than that of his rival.

ems to have been for an artistic purpose that Shake- in the following year chose the rape of Lucretia as the t of a poem which forms at once a pendant and a con- o the preceding one. Having painted the attempt of orous woman to seduce a youth, he proceeded to nt the rape of a chaste wife by a wretched debauchee. latter work shows increased power and breadth, but the fects in strengthened form. The speeches are longer ver and less appre n before his crime, n the assault and inute descriptions, pecially irritating, veiling and enervating, as they do, gedy of the theme. In the portrait of Lucrece, asleep er bed as Tarquin draws her curtains, poetry and bad re inextricably mingled.

n end to end of the poem the reader is exasperated by et's very talent, his fancy and eloquence, and is brought ret both Ovid's quieter picture and Chaucer's artless ing thereof. He tells himself that the limits of the and restrictions of the theatre had the happy effect ting bounds to the poet's exuberance. An aspect of peare is revealed which could not appear so clearly

ost popular specimens of the poetry of questionable ter which the Puritans were wont, not without the t of forcible arguments, to rebuke.

(*f*) PIOUS AND REFLECTIVE POETS. (1) SOUTHWELL, SYLVESTER.—Together with licentious poems, Italy supplied pious effusions which were equally mannered and were marked by the same cult of conceits. It is very remarkable that the Catholic poet Robert Southwell (1561–95) [1] sought in Italy an antidote to the heady stanzas of *Venus and Adonis.* This ardent Jesuit, who lived in the hope of martyrdom and was indeed executed, after cruel tortures, at Tyburn in 1595, left behind him verses which are the most religious of his generation, marred though they are by the preciosity of the day. It was in prison that he conceived the idea of writing poems in which passion should become the servant of faith. In *St. Peter's Complaint* he repeats the stanza of *Venus and Adonis.* The poem abounds with forced similes, paradoxes, and antitheses. Southwell, exactly like the French Malherbe who was sowing his wild oats at this moment, reproduces the mannerisms of the Italian Tansillo.

His lyric ardour is purer in the short pieces which follow his *Complaint* and form the collection called *Maeoniae.* The ---- famous of them is that strange and ardent vision *The ing Babe,* which shows the Christ-child on fire with suffer- ıd love, and was admired by Ben Jonson. To this should lded his *Fourfold Meditation of the Four Last Things,* :static contemplation of celestial joys which is like a ıste of Crashaw.

ıthwell's Catholicism isolated him among the English- ɔf his generation. The chief part of Elizabethan religious y consisted of translations from the Huguenot poet du ıs,[2] whose *Semaine* (1578), followed by his *Seconde ine* (1584), acquired extraordinary celebrity in Protest- :ountries. James VI of Scotland, Thomas Hudson, and p Sidney himself immediately translated extracts, but pecial interpreter was Joshua Sylvester,[3] who from 1590 99 published copious renderings of the verses of the French and in 1605–6, under James I, a complete translation of 'orks. Both du Bartas and his translator won immediate ;nition; no work of this time received more enthusiastic e. The grandeur of the subject, which was the creation e world, made the production of any less ambitious muse petty. The grandiloquence of du Bartas was taken 'ure sublimity, and, far from shocking English taste, his

ited by Grosart (1872). See P. Janelle, *Robert Southwell the Writer* (1935).
Ashton, *Du Bartas en Angleterre* (1908).
- ıuited by Grosart, 2 vols. (1880).

te epithets, which soon made du Bartas ridiculous in

won yet more tardily the most honourable of all his
o fame, that of leading Milton to choose the sacred

of *La Semaine* was an even more impressive event.
ntism, hitherto divorced from the Muses, conceived
irst time the idea of a high epic poetry based on the
poetry, but were
mporaries, found
shing':

Des vers que sans rougir la vierge puisse lire.

La Semaine, I ii, line 30

of Spenser, proselytize though he did on behalf of
ntism and morality, this could not always be said.
tas did not think it necessary to transpose the Bible

s ephemeral.

R JOHN DAVIES AND DAVIES OF HEREFORD.—Southwell
rdent piety stands almost alone. Only a generation
n did the example of du Bartas give rise to a truly
n poetry. But under Elizabeth some poets who had
come under his influence followed tendencies which,
e prevalence of the fantastic, were markedly severe,

rom their fellows

ohn Davies (1569–1626),[1] a lawyer who became a

3 vols. (1869–79), and *Complete Poems*, 2 vols. (1876), ed. by Grosart.

statesman, began by giving free rein to his capricious imagination in his *Orchestra, or a Poeme on Dauncing* (1596), one of the most curious examples of the strange Elizabethan inventiveness. He represents Penelope as refusing to dance with the suitor Antinous, who thereupon proves to her that the exercise is both ancient and universal, since the elements and the heavenly bodies, involved in rhythmic movement, are so many dancers. On this curious theme the poet has many animated stanzas, some of which attain to true poetry. Three years later, he produced a series of twenty-six hymns in acrostics to Astraea, or Elizabeth, which are full of go, and also a more serious poem on the immortality of the soul, *Nosce Teipsum* (1599), which very happily, in eloquent quatrains, reconciles imagination and logic. This poem was at the time the supreme attempt to reason in verse, for all that it did not quite escape infection from the reigning fantastic tendency. In this age of madrigals and pastorals it constitutes an anomaly.

Much more profusely, but with much less poetic swing, the Welsh poet and writing-master John Davies of Hereford (1565?–1618?),[1] almost the namesake of him whom we have just considered, wrote many poems on theological and philosophical subjects, the best known of them *Mirum in Modum* (1602), a dissertation on the glory of God and the form of the soul, and *Microcosmos* (1603), a description of the small world of man with instructions on the art of governing it. This is a vague metrical treatise on physiology and psychology. The writer continued to make verses until his death, sacred verses especially, but satires and epigrams intermingled with them. He had little poetry, but an unfailing and unmistakable edifying tendency.

(*g*) Satire.—In 1597 a young man who had just left the university wrote at the beginning of a collection of satires:

I first adventure, with fool-hardy might,
To tread the steps of perilous despight:
I first adventure, follow me who list,
And be the second English satirist.

This was Joseph Hall (1574–1656),[2] and his arrogant announcement was a sign of presumption rather than knowledge. No one is ever the first. Without going back to *Piers Plowman*, we find that satire had flourished in various forms since the Renascence, in Skelton and Wyatt and more recently in George Gascoigne, the author of *The Steel Glass*. It had made use of

[1] Edited by Grosart, 2 vols. (1873).
[2] Complete poetical works edited by Grosart (1879).

As much of a classicist as Sidney, Hall protests against the buffoonery of the clowns introduced into tragedies and the consequent 'goodlie hotch-potch.'

Hall does not confine his strictures to literature. He draws a vigorous little picture of the hardships suffered by a tutor in a squire's household, inventing an advertisement in which all the services and compliances the squire expects of the poor man are enumerated.

> All these observ'd, he could contented be
> To give five markes, and winter liverie,

it concludes.

The Church soon robbed letters of this young and most promising satirist. Hall became a bishop, and it is remarkable that the other satirists of the period also ended as clergy, just as in France Régnier became a canon of Chartres.

Such was the fate of John Marston (1575–1634),[1] the most cynical of the Elizabethan authors, whose first efforts were the licentious poem *The Metamorphosis of Pigmalions Image* and *Certaine Satyres*, most of them collected in *The Scourge of Villanie* (1598). Marston was attacked for the immorality of his *Pigmalion*, and defended himself by stating that he wrote it to ridicule the fashionable licentious paintings. The sincerity of the defence is doubtful and the same doubt attaches to all this poet's satires. Under the pretence of teaching morals, Marston allows himself to go to the extreme of coarseness both in subject and in language. He is certainly more virulent than Hall, but he is also more declamatory and much less accurate. In his writing there is hardly anything representative of the period. His pedantry is as excessive as his cynicism. On the whole, he is most remarkable for his gift of words. His lungs are strong and insults spring plentifully to his lips, as he ploughs up

> The hidden entrailes of ranke villanie,
> Tearing the vaile from damn'd impietie.
> Quake guzzell dogs, that live on putrid slime,
> Skud from the lashes of my yerking rime.

Here and there, amid this emphatic flow of words, something or someone is more exactly delineated, for instance the amateur of the theatre whose criticism, like the speech of Shakespeare's Pistol, is all in the verbiage of tragedies. It is also permissible to believe that under the Latin names of his characters Marston

[1] Complete edition by Bullen, 3 vols. (1885).

is aiming at contemporaries, that Tubrio, for example, stands for Marlowe. But generalities prevail and identifications are difficult.

At the same time as Hall and Marston, if not a little before them, John Donne (1573–1631) [1] as early as 1593 composed his first satires. The future dean of St. Paul's was then writing satiric and erotic poetry in turns. But his early verses did not

...eady apparent. Yet more ...reminiscences, he desired ...versification used by the Romans. A precocious taste for the obscure led him to prefer Persius, who is his favourite model.

Never has English metre, the heroic metre, suffered as at his hands. He wrote so-called couplets, but allowed himself to drag the sense from one line to the next in the most violent way and to make the most singular divisions of his line. More than this, he violates the iambic rhythm over and over again and many of his lines cannot be scanned.

> If all things be in all,
> As I think, since all which were, are and shall
> Be, be made of the same elements,
> Each thing each thing implies or represents

When he rhymes unaccented syllables—officèrs, suitòrs—the fact may be ascribed to archaism, but with little probability, since he aimed at modernism and a reproduction of the inflections of everyday speech. It is rather that he despised the laws of versification.

As for his subjects, they are traditional but reanimated by

he leaves him in order to greet some important personage

The poet's subtle and metaphysical imagination was already ...ch exposes the wretchedness ...strates are the sea in which ...ants the streams which feed that sea. The queen can do nothing in the matter she is like the calm source of the Thames, ignorant who owns the

[1] See *infra*, p 333, n.

meadows flooded by its branches or the cornfields its waters inundate.

> O age of rusty iron! Some better wit
> Call it some worse name, if ought equal it,
> Th' iron age was, when justice was sold; now
> Injustice is sold dearer.

With Marston and Hall, Donne represents classical Elizabethan satire. This was, however, only a small part of the satirical poetry of the period. The spirit of satire was more abundantly manifest outside the regular forms. The prose of such as Nashe, the 'English Juvenal,' is nothing but a long, droll, Rabelaisian satire. It was, however, especially under James I that satire ceased to be merely literary, and became the sincere and vehement expression of a pessimism which was often painful. Pure satire became frequent on the stage, not only in Ben Jonson's plays, but also in those of most of his contemporaries, not excepting Shakespeare, whose *Hamlet, King Lear, Troilus and Cressida*, and *Timon of Athens* have many touches and even whole passages in the tone of bitter invective. All the dramatists mockingly or indignantly denounce vice, at least intermittently. Sometimes they inveigh against the society of their day, sometimes against mankind itself.

2. *Poetry under James I (1603–25)*.—There is something arbitrary in a separation of the poetry of Elizabeth and of James I. The division must be understood to be convenient rather than anything else, a device to assist the chronology of literary history. The poets who wrote as much in one reign as the other are numerous—Shakespeare, Daniel, Drayton, Chapman, and others—and to attribute much importance to the change of sovereign would be puerile. Yet the division has the advantage that it marks an evolution which, in spite of many exceptions, caused the first two decades of the seventeenth century to differ from the last two of the sixteenth.

Elizabeth's reign has the glory of youth and growth, of national expansion and patriotic faith. The whole of literature is lit up by the victory over the Armada. Even the bitterest satires and the gloomiest pages written have a spontaneity and dash which are near to joy. We feel the intense enjoyment of the poet who is adventuring into new paths, his delight with his own creations. He derives from life, from the things he sees, and from the current ideas, a pleasure perpetually renewed. He is intoxicated with the novelty of his

metres and the freshness of his vocabulary. If he be Spenser he writes *Hymnes in honour of Love and Beautie*; if Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great*; if Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost* or *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has neither morals nor religion for his main objects, except such a façade as Spenser affixed to the *Faerie Queene*. Pessimism exists for him only superficially or momentarily, a cloudy sky through which the sun is about to break

Was it the effect of the vain attempt of Essex at a revolution which would have overthrown the old queen's unpopular counsellors? Was it the disillusionment of the dull reign of James I, when England withdrew into herself and the great hopes of expansion were frustrated? Or was it merely the weariness which followed on the long previous lyrical exaltation? Whatever were the causes, life came to seem sad, human nature perverse, society vitiated. Shakespeare wrote violent, poignant tragedies and comedies hardly less bitter. A harsh or cynical realism succeeded to the transports of former days, to the flights into ideal spheres

Poetry had grown self-conscious, the earlier ardour and easy enjoyment of colours and words now were on the wane. Poets readily became more moral or religious, sometimes more didactic. A general, more sombre or more melancholy hue was diffused over letters. While literature acquired more substance it became less capable of facile, light-hearted joy. Poetry was already a litt[illegible] ing great civil conflict, [illegible] Puritanism. If it were [illegible] succeeding generations, we would say that the second was nearer middle life than the first. Even such of its poets as reverted to the Elizabethan manner had lost the first freshness of invention; they were merely in the sequence.

(*a*) GEORGE WITHER.[1]—At the very end of Elizabeth's reign and under James I several poets flourished who are variously interesting, some who had received an impulse from their predecessors and others who adventured in new paths.

George Wither, William Browne, the two brothers Giles and Phineas Fletcher, and Drummond of Hawthornden may be cited as in the succession of Spenser. The spirit of the pastoral or the allegory or the refinement of the sonneteers dominates their work.

[1] His poems have been edited by H. Morley (1891).

George Wither (1588–1667), the Puritan satirist, a voluminous writer, lived to see the Restoration, but all of his verses which deserve to survive were published before 1622. The son of a Hampshire country gentleman, he was educated by the rector of the parish, and his early home gave him a strong taste for the country and a love of solitary independence. His poems, which are often autobiographical, describe his rustic, unsophisticated youth. When he reached the court of James I, at the age of eighteen, he was scandalized by the lying and the licence he found there, and he satirized the court in his *Abuses stript and whipt* which appeared in 1613. The satire is general, without personal attacks, but it caused such displeasure that Wither was imprisoned in the Marshalsea. He was there for several months, and there wrote one of his most charming poems, *The Shepherd's Hunting*, published in 1615. It is a sort of pastoral in the form of a dialogue between Willy, who represents the poet William Browne, and Philarete, the friend of virtue, otherwise Wither himself. In the most famous passage the prisoner Philarete encourages Willy to resume his interrupted pastoral songs, describing to him how he beguiles his own captivity with the help of his muse, who shows him how to enjoy in memory the natural beauty from which he is debarred. It is here that an outburst of gratitude to Nature occurs which at this date is surprising, one which contains all Wordsworth in germ:

> In my former dayes of blisse,
> Her divine skill taught me this,
> That from every thing I saw,
> I could some invention draw:
> And raise pleasure to her height
> Through the meanest objects sight;
> By the murmure of a spring,
> Or the least boughs rusteling,
> By a dazie whose leaves spred,
> Shut when Tytan goes to bed,
> Or a shady bush or tree,
> She could more infuse in mee,
> Then all natures beauties can,
> In some other wiser man.

The other poems of Wither's youth are inspired by the same spirit, for instance his *Fidelia*, an elegy of love, which was followed by love songs. The satirist, who was soon to be a determined Puritan, appears in one song as a boon companion who refuses to waste himself in despair for a woman who

scorns him. In *Faire-Virtue, the Mistresse of Phil'Arete,* which he wrote in 1622, Wither perhaps reached his highest accomplishment, but unfortunately his prolixity and the common and heavy character of his moralizing had increased, and the collection is only intermittently of value. The song of *The Steadfast Shepherd* is a farewell to the sirens whom the poet rejects for virtue.

pleasures of an honest li

querable love for the tra

writes one of the lustiest of the poems inspired by the roast-turkey season, one full of homely merriment. With its refrain, 'And let us be merry,' it exhales the mirth of pagan rather than Christian festivities and heralds, two centuries in advance, the Dickens Christmas. It has Dickens's sentimental joviality, for Wither too remembers the unfortunate who

itan,

rned

but

also punishment from Ben Jonson, who in *Chronomastix* defended his times against this reviler. Henceforward Wither, once a writer of gentle pastorals, gave himself up to the composition of satires in which elements of exaltation and mysticism are mingled. He became one of the prophets of the Revolution, the typical Puritan scribbler, and thus exposed himself to the ridicule of Cleveland and Butler, producing such rubbish that Pope calls him 'wretched Wither' and instances

selector.

(*b*) William Browne.[1]—William Browne (1591–1643), the friend of Wither's youth, confined himself strictly to the pastoral. His *Britannia's Pastorals* has, by reason of its extent and patriotic title, made him something like the classical representative of pastoral poetry in his country.

[1] Complete edition by W. C. Hazlitt (1868). Poems ed. by G. Goodwin (The Muses' Library, 2 vols., 1894). See F. W. Moorman, *William Browne, his Britannia's Pastorals*; E. Gosse, *The Jacobean Poets* (1899).

He was inspired by Spenser's *Calendar*, especially in *Shepheard's Pipe* (1614), which is a series of eclogues, seri or homely by turns. In *Britannia's Pastorals*, of which t first book appeared in 1613, the second in 1616, while t third remained in manuscript until 1852, he was undoubted under Spenser's influence, but Sidney's *Arcadia* was his chi model. Unfortunately he imitated too closely the confusio of plots in the great romance and the entangled adventure which form the web of his poem cannot be summarized. Th principal thread is supplied by the story of the love of Celan dine and Marina. Celandine becomes indifferent to Marina, who has given him her heart too quickly. She wishes to drown herself, but is saved by the river-god, who carries her off to Mona, where she is imprisoned in a cave by the monster Limos, or Hunger. From the time he loses her Celandine again loves her, searches Fairyland for her, and there finds Spenser asleep. The poem stops before Celandine's adventures are concluded.

Many other stories, nearly as long, fill the poem, which is half allegory and half mythology. Its subject is, however, of secondary importance. Its charm is constituted by a wandering fancy. It must be read, like *The Faerie Queene*, in a leisurely way, and also with indulgence for the young poet's numerous faults, his inequalities as he constantly lapses from poetry into flatness, his too heavy decoration as he strings pompous similes together and thus interrupts his narrative, his conceits, his facetiousness which does not stop short of punning, and his composite epithets after the manner of du Bartas.

Yet Browne has interesting characteristics, distinct from those of his models. His poem is written in couplets which often have a distinctly classical air, the lines marching two by two, and having an epigrammatic or proverbial turn. And the couplets are not seldom interrupted to make way for graceful songs and touching elegies.

One of the attractions of the poem is its evidence of Browne's love for his own county of Devon, his pride in its glory as the nursery of seafaring adventurers, and his intimate knowledge of its natural features and local customs. Although he was beguiled into factitious and romantic pastoral poetry, Browne was capable of seeing Nature as she is, and sometimes he painted her successfully. He could make English birds sing in concert, and he could bring a hunt to life or depict an effect ...wn in a village

Always he is cheerful. He enjoyed writing verses. He had youth and he wrote from the heart.

His *Pastorals* are certainly no masterpiece. He is a richer and less correct Racan who occupies an honourable place below the great.

(*c*) Phineas Fletcher.—The influence of Spenser on Phineas Fletcher (1582–1650),[1] the incumbent of a small Norfolk parish, was yet more marked. Although his poems did not appear until 1631 and 1633, they were written much earlier, for he calls them 'these rawe Essayes of my very unripe years, and almost childehood.' They probably date from his [illegible]

Shepheard's Calendar, and, like the Spenserian shepherds, his fishermen alternately converse of love and of religion. His [illegible]

Phineas Fletcher, who acknowledged him as his master:

> And that French Muse's eagle eye and tongue
> [illegible] 'd the art
> [illegible]

This unfortunate love for a pseudo-great poet led Phineas Fletcher into many extravagances. The presentment of his allegory is clumsy to the point of being ridiculous. The allegory itself, in which the island, with its hills, rivers, and woods, represents the human body, is like a disguised lesson in physiology. The author attempts to be at once technical and poetic, and finds himself obliged to explain his verses by numerous long footnotes. He is fairly well informed on anatomy, but is unaware of Harvey's discoveries about the circulation of the blood, and considers flesh to be blood badly dried. His mistakes are, however, less regrettable than his method. In his exposition of the structure of the body he repeats Drayton's unhappy attempt to versify geography. The feat is something like that of the descriptive writers of [illegible]

[1] Giles and Phineas Fletcher, *Poetical Works*, ed. Boas, 2 vols. (1908–9).

eye, Gustus the taste, whose wife is the garrulous Li
so forth. These faculties are served by grooms corre
to the secondary organs, the muscles or nerves.
in the valleys, on the hills, or in the towns.

All this part of the poem is a paraphrase of the d
of the Castle of Alma in Book II (cantos 9–11) of *T*
Queene, with the difference that Fletcher, in his de
scientific and technical, obscures the Spenserian sy
Spenser's stanzas xxi to xxxiv are interminably
out in Fletcher's first five cantos. From a hundre
draws fifteen hundred. Nothing shows better tha
parison between the two works Spenser's real gen
great even in the passages of his poem which are le
lated to please to-day. His long-windedness ap
brevity, his strangeness as good taste and classical jud

In the moral part of his allegory, in which he is m
ease, Fletcher is still the disciple of Spenser, who sh
Castle of Alma or the Soul attacked by the vices
Similarly Fletcher paints battles between the vices
virtues, the latter led by Eclecta, or the Church. I
them in chivalrous language as knightly conflicts.
is a more visibly Christian Belphoebe or Britom
historical allusions and the flattery also recall *T*
Queene: the angel who comes from heaven to sav
is King James I.

Yet Spenser's pupil is distinguished from his mas
greater religious fervour and by his literary form—t
stanza, the quickened movement, the more modern
total absence of archaism.

In spite of all his strange inventions and scientific
this is a true poet. His images drawn from natur
great rarity, but their grace and liveliness are t
There is a ring in the stanzas which describe the jo
Church reunited to good, to Christ, and to God, a
dialogue between husband and wife and the pictur
paradisial joys.

Fletcher is in some sort the connecting-link bet
poet of *The Faerie Queene* and Bunyan, who described

(*d*) Giles Fletcher.[1] — The poetry of Giles
(1588?–1623), also a country clergyman, was, even r
his brother's, marked by religious fervour, and bore

[1] Edited by Grosart for the Fuller Worthies Library in 1868 and

the renewal of faith and mysticism which was soon to affect many of the Anglican clergy, so aptly reprehended by Spenser for inertia and indifference. Giles Fletcher's chief poem, and almost his only one, is *Christs Victorie and Triumph*, which [illegible]

of *The Faery Queene* and *Paradise Regained*. Its subject is [illegible]

which had lately been translated by Sylvester (1605–6). As du Bartas inspires his subject, so he takes his style and his versification from Spenser. His stanza is Spenser's shorn of one line, and in his style there is Spenser's harmony and redundancy, together with an overweight of flowers and epithets, and also an inclination to antithesis unknown to his master.

There is greatness in the opening stanzas, the debate between [illegible]

all the temptations of the Evil One—despair, presumption, vainglory, voluptuousness, pride, and covetousness. He passes through the same trials as Spenser's Sir Guyon.

There follows Christ's triumph over death in a picture of the Passion, and His triumph after death portrayed in a fervent hymn, an ecstatic description of earthly joys and regenerate man after the resurrection of the Saviour, and a final picture of the felicity of the blessed written in a spirit of exaltation. Except some of Shelley's visions, there is perhaps, in English, no other such rapturous description of paradise. Milton is too restrained, too severe, and too classical for such effects. Bunyan's heavenly Jerusalem repeats the Apocalypse too literally. Moreover, the faith of these great Puritans was too exclusive and individual. More than they, Giles Fletcher aspired to the felicity of all good Christians;

errors of the Old Testament. For all his striking youthful defects, he has an honourable place among the religious poets of England. Religion was to him the source not of wearing scruples or of fears, but of beatific visions.

(*e*) DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.[1]—William Drummond of Hawthornden (1585–1649) has a place among Spenser's successors for different reasons than Phineas Fletcher.

This Scot, who wrote the purest English, was a great man of letters, knowing the literature and the languages of the moderns as of the ancients. He was especially susceptible to the Italian influence. While his poetry is full of reminiscences it is marked by a suave, slightly melancholy tone which makes it personal. It consists mainly of the book of poems published in 1616, a long panegyric on James VI on the occasion of his visit to his native country, entitled *The River of Forth Feasting* (1617), and a collection published in 1623 and called *Flowers of Sion*. The poet's talent is best revealed in his sonnets, which are Italian in form, save that they end with an epigrammatic couplet. His sincere love for nature is apparent through his sonneteer's conventions and his reminiscences. Living far from the centre of English literature, he cultivated the sonnet when in England its popularity was on the wane and it was no longer regularly used by poets.

(*f*) BEN JONSON.[2]—In contrast to the poets just reviewed who followed beaten tracks, we have two who were pioneers, Ben Jonson and John Donne. It was they whose influence was felt by the greatest number of their countrymen down to the Restoration.

Although Ben Jonson was first of all a dramatist, his poetic work, other than dramatic, is of fairly considerable extent. It consists of short pieces, written throughout his life, which appeared in three collections, *Epigrammes* and *The Forrest* published together in the folio of 1616, and *Under-Woods* published in the folio of 1641, after his death. No weight should be attached to the difference of titles, which implies no real difference of subject. All the collections are of de-

[1] Ed. Ward, for the Muses' Library, 2 vols. (1894), Fréchette (1912), and Kastner, 2 vols. (Manchester, 1913).

[2] The poems of Ben Jonson have been edited separately by B. H. Newdigate (Oxford, 1936). For complete editions of his works and for critical studies see *infra*, p. 443, n.

tached poems. Complimentary verses as well as satirical quatrains are included with the *Epigrammes*, and *Under-Woods* contains poems longer than *The Forrest*, a word which merely translates the Latin title *Silva*. These two or three hundred little sets of verses may well be considered in accordance with their character, irrespectively of the collection in which each occurs.

Si
se
ne

portraits in ten or twenty lines, not unlike the 'humorous' characters so plentiful in his comedies. Some types are

of oaths; and

Poor Poet-ape, that would be thought our chiefe,

who 'takes up all, makes each man's wit his owne,' and in whom some have believed they saw an offensive picture of Shakespeare.

Ben Jonson also wrote moral satires which were on a larger scale and were nobler in tone and more sincere in expression than those of Hall and Marston. His *Epistle to Sir Edward Sackville* inveighs effectively against patrons who grant their

to persuade him to the Wars. He advises him to flee a town where men, in the leisure of peace, lead a shameful life, and to seek the camp. It is in such poems that Jonson's personality best appears, his blunt frankness which expressed itself in harsh versification, strong rather than harmonious.

But there is more than satire in the collections. They include many complimentary lines to the contemporary writers who were the poet's friends, if not his rivals—Bacon, Camden, Drayton, Chapman, Donne, William Browne, Sylvester, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, Shakespeare. The verses in honour of Shakespeare, inserted at the beginning of the works of his rival, are very beautiful. While Shakespeare

lived, Ben Jonson's relations with him seem to have been cordial and hostile by turns, but after his death any jealousy or animosity he may have felt for him was effaced; and there remained an enthusiastic, feeling admiration which produced the first unreserved and worthy celebration of his greatness.

Ben Jonson's praise was not always either so just or so fitly bestowed. Yet, when the hyperbolical flattery usual in his day is remembered, it is rather the manliness of his address to his patrons which is striking. His verses to the Sidney family and to the poet's sister, the Countess of Pembroke, are no mere sycophantic eulogy. He has fine verses on Penshurst, Sir Philip Sidney's birthplace where he had himself received hospitality, on its amenities and charms and especially on the rustic simplicity and patriarchal virtue it sheltered. This poem is far superior to his long, elaborately staged compositions, whether odes or epithalamiums, which must be regarded mainly as literary exercises in the manner of the ancients. He was the first Englishman to write Pindaric odes, with strophe, antistrophe, and epode, and the experiment cannot be called a happy one. Its artifice is too apparent and the author has not the qualities which make great lyricism.

Like the poets of the French Pleiad, Jonson was more successful in his imitations of the Greek Anthology, writing beautiful elegies and, in particular, touching and noble epitaphs. In this *genre* he was surpassed only by Herrick, his disciple.

Love figures in his collections, but merely, it would seem, as a literary theme. The *Celebration of Charis*, which he says he wrote at fifty years of age, is very fanciful and lively, and, of the ten poems which compose it, the fourth is in stanzas of a rare and truly lyrical pattern. In general, however, his love pieces reproduce poems of antiquity. The learned Ben Jonson translated more than he invented.

His work, taken together, offers some general characteristics. He was the most learned and the most convinced of the humanists of his generation. Until Milton he was, with his unmatched knowledge of Greek and even greater knowledge of Latin, first among them. He was little influenced by French or Italian literature, being ill acquainted with those languages, and he had not Spenser's sympathy with the Middle Ages. His culture was fundamentally Latin. The Latin muse appealed to his robust genius, with its desire for energy and tendency to moralize. It certainly was not

through him alone, but it was principally through his means, that neo-classicism was introduced into English poetry in the seventeenth century. He makes us feel that we are on the road to Dryden.

It is, however, his second characteristic that his personality is not stifled by his Latin livery. On the contrary, it shows itself very openly. Ben Jonson was a glorious egoist, very strongly individualized, with fixed ideas which he asserted arrogantly. His pride, his contempt for ignorance and hypocrisy, his love of frankness and loyalty, his straightness, the manly affection of which he was capable—all these are manifest in his verses.

He was without certain gifts—spontaneity and fancy. His style inclines to the abstract and lacks imagery. His metres are varied, but his rhythm is not pliable. There are many hard constructions in his verses, and Dryden called his translations 'jaw-breaking.' But he contributed to the poetry of his country some qualities in which it was then defective; he aimed at putting much meaning into the material [illegible] reflection, self-control.

This was why in the latter part of his life, and especially after 1620, many admirers and disciples were grouped about him. He spoke as a master who knew the law, and many listened. He was the central poet, king of the taverns frequented by poets. Beaumont and Herrick have sung 'those lyric feasts' where 'rare Ben Jonson' was king. He had his [illegible] owing [illegible] Greek [illegible] His [illegible] d and [illegible] after a secular youth, took orders at the age of forty-three, in 1615, and ended as dean of St. Paul's, is perhaps the most singular

[1] *Poems*, ed. H. J. C. Grierson, text and commentary, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1912), text alone, 1 vol. (1929); *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*, ed. J. Hayward (1929). For the prose, see also *infra*, p. 362, n. 2. Life in *Walton's Lives*, ed. Saintsbury (World's Classics, 1927). See E. Gosse, *Life and Letters of John Donne*, 2 vols. (1909); M. P. Ramsay, *Les Doctrines médiévales chez Donne* (Oxford, 1916); Mario Praz, *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* (Florence, 1925), P. Legouis, *Donne the Craftsman* (Paris, 1928); G. Williamson, *The Donne Tradition* (Harvard, 1930); *A Garland for Donne*, ed. T. Spencer (ibid., 1931); C. M. Coffin, *John Donne and the New Philosophy*, (Columbia, 1937).

of English poets. His verses offer examples of everything castigated by classical writers as bad taste and eccentricity, all pushed to such an extreme that the critic's head swims as he condemns.

Donne was a precocious poet who began to make rhymes about 1593 and had written many of his best poems before he was twenty-five. He would therefore be, in the strict sense, an Elizabethan, were it not that his poems, with a few exceptions, were not published until after his death in 1633. They were read in literary circles before they were printed, but they exercised their large and curious influence after their appearance in book form.

At the outset of Donne's career Spenser had already won his glory, and the Petrarchian sonneteers were producing collection upon collection. The independent young poet reacted against these schools. He found pastoral poetry, mythology, the allegory, Platonism, the taste for platitudes and for copious and facile description in the fashion. He despised convention and the morals of chivalry, as he despised highly regular metres and monotonous and harmonious cadences. His violation of rhythm in his *Satires* has already been mentioned. Some of it subsists in his *Songs and Sonnets* and his *Elegies*. His friend and admirer Ben Jonson said of him that he esteemed him 'the first poet in the world for some things,' but also that 'Donne, for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging.' Closely examined, this crime, for such it is, derives from his subordination of melody to meaning, his refusal to submit to the reigning hierarchy of words, sometimes from his lapses into the expressive spoken tongue, in defiance of the convention of poetic rhythm. He introduces into rhymed verse such bold innovations as were customary in the blank verse of the dramatists:

When thou knew'st *what* I dreamt, when thou knew'st *when*.

To smoothly flowing lines he often prefers those, freely divided, in which the accents have an effect of shock, pull the reader up and awaken his attention.

His style is analogous. He will have nothing to do with the easy and familiar, the mythological imagery; he turns out the company of the gods and goddesses and rejects the spoils of Greek and Latin poetry. His horror for the commonplace amounts to a cult of the eccentric. At the risk of being enigmatic, he takes pleasure only in the subtle. His sonnets,

often such not in structure but merely in name, are akin by

sublime and the trivial. He deduces every kind of consequence from the fact that a flea hops from biting him to suck his mistress's blood. He will not let her kill this creature

a poem.

He has sudden impulses of thought which react strangely, sometimes advantageously, from the restricted modulations of madrigal makers, for instance the opening lines of his *Good Morrow*:

> I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I
> Did, till we lov'd?

At the beginning of *The Canonization* this abruptness is mingled with a piquant discourtesy to a friend who would deter him from love:

> For God's sake, hold your tongue, and let me love.

The inverse of the Petrarchians, Donne generally rejects

are without virtue or faith...

When a woman seems worthy to inspire a passion, Donne

holds Platonic love to be a lure, or seeks, with subtle sophistry, to change it to its contrary. With what insidious arguments would he persuade his love to give herself to him entirely! His most beautiful poem is perhaps his *Ecstasy*, in which, when he has long adored his beloved, dumb and motionless, their hands and eyes meeting, he begs that their passion may have its fleshly consummation. Their two hearts are melted into one. They feel that they have become pure spirits. From this height at which they plane how little does the body matter! Poor body, which yet deserves its reward for having brought them together! To remember it is only just:

> But, O, alas! so long, so far
>   Our bodies why do we forbear?
> They are ours, though not we . . .

Although Donne's love is always profoundly sensuous, it is sometimes expressed with singular force and grandeur. The thought of death ennobles it. In *The Anniversary* he sees it persisting even in the grave. In *The Relique* he imagines himself dead and beneath the soil. His grave is opened to admit the body of another and on his wrist the gravedigger finds

> A bracelet of bright hair about the bone.

Henceforth both of them, because of their great love, will be honoured like saints:

> All women shall adore us, and some men.

Thus everything in Donne's early poems is in revolt against the poetic canons of the age. Their wit is indeed by itself no novelty. Wit—and conceits—abound in Sidney and in Shakespeare. But in them they are an ornament, an occasional grace. In Donne wit is everywhere. It is his very genius, and fashions his feeling and his thought. He is overweighted with allusions to philosophical doctrines, even scholastic philosophy in which he was expert, and to contemporary science, even of the most abstruse description. His muse loves those sudden flights from the material to the spiritual sphere for which Dryden gave him, and Samuel Johnson confirmed to him, the title of 'metaphysical.' He deserves it also for his obscurity, which is sometimes terrible. He is again like Browning because the very difficulty in reading him has counted for something in his success, because it became a point of vanity to be subtle enough to apprehend

his subtlety, to have enough mental agility to follow his somersaults.

We have spoken hitherto only of the secular poems of his youth. They are the best. Moreover, his religious poems differ from them only in theme; their spirit is the same. He is at his best in short pieces. In his longer, more ambitious [illegible]

except in small doses, as was proved by his many imitators, the metaphysicals of the seventeenth century. The long poems of that age are few and, except for those of Milton, negligible. But the poets produced copiously little sets of verses which are found in anthologies and are sometimes exquisite.

Like his contemporaries, Gongora in Spain and Marini in [illegible]

thought.

holds Platonic love to be a lure, or seeks, with subtle sophistry, to change it to its contrary. With what insidious arguments would he persuade his love to give herself to him entirely! His most beautiful poem is perhaps his *Ecstasy*, in which, when he has long adored his beloved, dumb and motionless, their hands and eyes meeting, he begs that their passion may have its fleshly consummation. Their two hearts are melted into one. They feel that they have become pure spirits. From this height at which they plane how little does the body matter! Poor body, which yet deserves its reward for having brought them together! To remember it is only just:

> But, O, alas! so long, so far
> Our bodies why do we forbear?
> They are ours, though not we . . .

Although Donne's love is always profoundly sensuous, it is sometimes expressed with singular force and grandeur. The thought of death ennobles it. In *The Anniversary* he sees it persisting even in the grave. In *The Relique* he imagines himself dead and beneath the soil. His grave is opened to admit the body of another and on his wrist the gravedigger finds

> A bracelet of bright hair about the bone.

Henceforth both of them, because of their great love, will be honoured like saints:

> All women shall adore us, and some men.

Thus everything in Donne's early poems is in revolt against the poetic canons of the age. Their wit is indeed by itself no novelty. Wit—and conceits—abound in Sidney and in Shakespeare. But in them they are an ornament, an occasional grace. In Donne wit is everywhere. It is his very genius, and fashions his feeling and his thought. He is overweighted with allusions to philosophical doctrines, even scholastic philosophy in which he was expert, and to contemporary science, even of the most abstruse description. His muse loves those sudden flights from the material to the spiritual sphere for which Dryden gave him, and Samuel Johnson confirmed to him, the title of 'metaphysical.' He deserves it also for his obscurity, which is sometimes terrible. He is again like Browning because the very difficulty in reading him has counted for something in his success, because it became a point of vanity to be subtle enough to apprehend

his subtlety, to have enough mental agility to follow his somersaults.

We have spoken hitherto only of the secular poems of his youth. They are the best. Moreover, his religious poems differ from them only in theme: their spirit is the same. He is at his best in short pieces. In his longer, more ambitious poems, like *The Anatomy of the World*, and *Of the Progress of the Soul*, also called *The First Anniversary* and *The Second Anniversary*, he is nothing short of unbearable, for all that these verses are illumined by stray lightning flashes. He was made

metaphysicals of the seventeenth century. The long poems of that age are few and, except for those of Milton, negligible. But the poets produced copiously little sets of verses which are

thought

his themes are as romantic as those of the author of *Arcadia. Arbasto*, for instance, is a love story as complicated as it is tragic. Arbasto, king of Denmark, placed between the two daughters of the king of France, loves one of them unrequitedly, is loved by the other to whom he is indifferent, and finally is the cause of both their deaths. The romantic character of *Pandosto* can be conceived from *The Winter's Tale*, for which it supplied the plot. *Menaphon* is an agreeable [illegible]

Weep not my wanton, smile upon my knee

There is an element of true feeling at the heart of these fantastic stories.

But Greene did not always write romance. He had also a more popular and realistic vein illustrated in the series of short stories called *The Conny-catching Tracts* (1591-2), in which he turns to profit his acquaintance with every kind of ruffian, thief, loose woman, and rascal in order to paint the underworld of London and initiate the reader into the whole bag of sharpers' tricks for decoying the unwary. Whether his first object be indeed, as he professes, to put the innocent on their guard against the rogues, whether his tales be not calculated to awaken an unhealthy interest in this cockney hell rather than to enforce a lesson in prudence, is uncertain. He undoubtedly enjoys retailing all the swindling, and sometimes, when he forgets himself, he is unquestionably on the side of the swindlers. His journalist's business—he is complacently recounting the happenings of disreputable streets—leads him to abandon euphuism for a simpler manner, and he thus enters on the road which led to Defoe.

The question of his sincerity arises especially in connection with his *Confessions*, the last in date of his prose works. Worn out by debauchery and poverty he brought out, one after another, several pamphlets filled from end to end with sorrowful

self-accusation. In these he avers his own conversion and deplores his errors, but this intemperate conversion involves the accusation of the companions of his debauchery, George Peele, Nashe and Marlowe, whom, without any scruple about implicating them, he apostrophizes. Repentance for their atheism, lusts, and blasphemies mingles with his remorse for his own backslidings, and he adjures them to be converted too. He must have been a drunkard to the end, for vinous tears have certainly watered the ink with which he pens these pages. The most famous passage is that in which this popular theatre-hack denounces a new playwright who once dressed himself out in borrowed plumes taken from Greene and his friends, but now can do without them. Here we have the first evidence of the success of Shakespeare, the actor-author. At the thought of his rivalry, Greene's complaints are turned to fury, and he forgets that he is speaking of the very vanities which elsewhere he declares himself to have outlived and exhorts his former boon companions to abandon.

(*b*) THOMAS LODGE.—Thomas Lodge (1558–1625), more prudent than Greene, ended his life, after a short and fairly brilliant career, in the sober middle class as a well-known doctor, and left behind him one euphuistic romance which is the most attractive of them all, *Rosalinde*, written in 1590 and the source of *As You Like It*. Undoubtedly Shakespeare read it with delight, and he was much in the author's debt, not only for his plot, but also for the character of his heroine. The romance is a medley, frequently charming, of monologues and witty sentimental dialogues, after the manner of Lyly, and of songs which are among the most delicately refined of the period.

(*c*) THOMAS NASHE. — Thomas Nashe (1567–1601) was, however, the real successor of Greene, the realist and satirist. Known at the age of twenty-five as the young Juvenal, he did not indeed wait for Greene's example before he gave rein to his liveliness. He was the outstanding picaresque author of the period and also the best equipped of the pamphleteers. Having acquired learning at Cambridge, he came to London, became Greene's friend, and flung himself desperately into every current dispute, particularly the Martin Marprelate controversy, then raging between Episcopalians and Puritans. Nashe wrote with a pen dipped in gall against the Puritans in general, but he distinguished and isolated one among his adversaries, Spenser's faithful friend, Gabriel Harvey, who had

had the bad taste to vituperate Greene after that writer's death. Nashe mishandled Harvey for several years, and mocked his heavy pedantry so vigorously that he kept the laugh on his own side.

In prose, or at least in English prose, Nashe was the creator of a new *genre*. He was, at the very outset of his career, the initiator of the grotesque satirical style which is compounded of the slangy and the lyrical. As early as 1589 he was using it against Greene's first dramatic rivals, probably Kyd and Marlowe. In his preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, addressed to the members of Oxford and Cambridge uni-

extravagance of the blank verse of *Tamburlaine* admirably when he speaks of 'the spacious volubilitie of a drumming decasyllabon.' But his attitude as champion of a simple, moderate style is no more than a pose. All his life he revelled in the frantic, and he ended by frankly avowing this taste and the models he preferred in the preface to his last book, the burlesque *Lenten Stuffe*, in which with Rabelaisian vigour he glorified the herring, the source of the wealth of Yarmouth, 'Mounsieur herring,' 'Solyman Herring,' 'Pater patriae.'

linsey woolsey

his hand at a romance, and being incapable of submitting to the starched style of euphuism or assuming the namby-pamby

innocence of the pastoral, he resorted to the picaresque, and produced *The Unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jacke Wilton.* The story purports to be historical—to relate the life of Jack Wilton, a page in the reign of Henry VIII who becomes an unscrupulous adventurer, and with whom we wander through Flanders, Germany, and Italy, meeting many celebrities and witnessing some famous scenes. Wilton is present at the battle of Marignan, at the fall of Munster, and at the massacre of the Anabaptists; be becomes the friend of Surrey during that nobleman's courtship of Geraldine; he watches Erasmus writing his *Praise of Folly* and Thomas More meditating his *Utopia*; he hears Luther's and Carlstadt's invectives against the pope and assists at the necromantic séances of Cornelius Agrippa. All these semi-historical scenes follow each other regardless of chronology and order, and with homely episodes interspersed among them. All have the vigour and concrete life imparted by a mocking imagination. It was the second part of this novel which made the greatest impression on the author's contemporaries. Its scene is Italy, and it shows in turn the magnificent Italy of the arts and the Italy of courtesans and assassins. Nashe alternates his admiration and his execration, now lures the traveller by the marvels he displays, now vituperates, as decidedly as Roger Ascham, the English who visit this land of crime, but he certainly gives much the most space to horrors. He first lays in abundant material for the later melodramatists, Marston, Tourneur, Webster, and Middleton, whose land of predilection Italy was. If Nashe begins by preserving the grotesque character of his scenes of strange debauchery and incredible tortures—the furies of the Jew Zadoch who seems to parody Marlowe's Barabas—he ends by relating the history of a vendetta, seriously, intensely, and passionately. His style changes. He rids himself of his habitual eccentricities, and recounts swiftly, clearly, and nakedly how Cutwolfe pursued Esdras, his brother's murderer, for twenty months, came upon him, unarmed, in his chamber, was deaf to the cowardly brigand's supplications, and with brandished dagger brought him, in the hope of a respite, to damn his soul with fearful blasphemies, before his throat was cut even as he uttered the abominations which must unfailingly send him straight to hell. No words painting a wretch's abject fear of death more strongly were ever to be uttered on the stage. 'Thou canst not send me to such a hell as already there is in my heart. . . . Thy over-hanging sword hides heaven from my

innocence of the pastoral, he resorted to the picaresque, and produced *The Unfortunate Traveller, or the Life of Jacke Wilton.* The story purports to be historical—to relate the life of Jack Wilton, a page in the reign of Henry VIII who becomes an unscrupulous adventurer, and with whom we wander through Flanders, Germany, and Italy, meeting many celebrities and witnessing some famous scenes. Wilton is present at the battle of Marignan, at the fall of Munster, and at the massacre of the Anabaptists; be becomes the friend of Surrey during that nobleman's courtship of Geraldine; he watches Erasmus writing his *Praise of Folly* and Thomas More meditating his *Utopia*; he hears Luther's and Carlstadt's invectives against the pope and assists at the necromantic séances of Cornelius Agrippa. All these semi-historical scenes follow each other regardless of chronology and order, and with homely episodes interspersed among them. All have the vigour and concrete life imparted by a mocking imagination. It was the second part of this novel which made the greatest impression on the author's contemporaries. Its scene is Italy, and it shows in turn the magnificent Italy of the arts and the Italy of courtesans and assassins. Nashe alternates his admiration and his execration, now lures the traveller by the marvels he displays, now vituperates, as decidedly as Roger Ascham, the English who visit this land of crime, but he certainly gives much the most space to horrors. He first lays in abundant material for the later melodramatists, Marston, Tourneur, Webster, and Middleton, whose land of predilection Italy was. If Nashe begins by preserving the grotesque character of his scenes of strange debauchery and incredible tortures—the furies of the Jew Zadoch who seems to parody Marlowe's Barabas—he ends by relating the history of a vendetta, seriously, intensely, and passionately. His style changes. He rids himself of his habitual eccentricities, and recounts swiftly, clearly, and nakedly how Cutwolfe pursued Esdras, his brother's murderer, for twenty months, came upon him, unarmed, in his chamber, was deaf to the cowardly brigand's supplications, and with brandished dagger brought him, in the hope of a respite, to damn his soul with fearful blasphemies, before his throat was cut even as he uttered the abominations which must unfailingly send him straight to hell. No words painting a wretch's abject fear of death more strongly were ever to be uttered on the stage. 'Thou canst not send me to such a hell as already there is in my heart. . . . Thy over-hanging sword hides heaven from my

sight.' Nor, especially, was the horrible enthusiasm of Cutwolfe, as he voices his joy in vengeance, ever equalled:

> Of hell doo I esteeme better than heaven, if it affoord me revenge. There is no heaven but revenge I tell thee, I would not have undertooke so much toyle to gaine heaven, as I have done in pursuing thee for revenge Divine revenge, of which (as one of the joies above) there is no fulnes or satietie.

other from whom it might have been translated has, however, been cited.

Nashe's one novel and his numerous pamphlets won him

He was

y Dekker,

Middleton.

Even his university kept a pride in his original talent. 'Let all his faults sleep with his mournful chest,' exhorted *The Returne from Parnassus* in 1602,

> Yet this I say, that for a mother's wit,
> Few men have ever seen the like of it

(*d*) Thomas Deloney.—Quite opposite qualities constitute the merit of Thomas Deloney (1543?–1600?), who has been recently discovered as a novelist. This weaver used to be known only as an author of popular ballads, some of them

Cordwainers. He reproduces better than any one else the spirit, the feelings, and the prejudices of the craftsman's world to which he belonged. Before there were any plays to flatter the tastes of this considerable section of the London public, Deloney wrote for them these curious books, entirely given up to stories of the crafts. His *Jacke of Newbury* relates the rise of a young weaver's apprentice who marries his master's widow and prospers marvellously. It takes us into the great weaver's shop with its two hundred looms, each worked by one man with a boy to help him, one hundred women carders

and two hundred spinsters, not to speak of the hundred and fifty children who pick the wool, the fifty shearers, the eighty rovers, the twenty fullers. It is not surprising that the rich owner receives a visit from King Henry VIII and figures as an historical personage.

The series of short stories devoted to the Cordwainers constitutes a complete, if not a truthful, history of their mystery. *The Gentle Craft* is a survey of shoemakers from legendary times and a pendant to the genealogies of nobles and kings. The trade was very much of the people, with its apprentices who sang rhymes and cracked jokes while they worked the leather, with its travelling journeymen trudging from town to town, their tools, the bones of St. Hugh, on their backs. Deloney sings their annals from the beginning, from the time of St. Hugh, their patron saint, who was martyred under Diocletian. There follows the story of Crispin and Crispian, sons of the queen of Logria, who were persecuted by the Emperor Maximian but finally triumphed, so that Crispin, the saint, married the emperor's daughter. The chronicler then jumps to the fifteenth century, and relates the rise, under Henry VI, of Simon Eyre, who became lord mayor, founded the leather-market in Leadenhall, and acquired lasting popularity by instituting a holiday on which the Cordwainers' apprentices feasted at his cost. Afterwards, under Henry VIII, Richard Castelar, who was no less rich, bequeathed his fortune to the poor and the hospitals.

Into this frame Deloney introduces a number of homely scenes. Caring nothing for historical colour, he sketches prentices and journeyman from the life, at work in the shops, singing, arguing, making love to customers who are usually maidservants from the taverns, or involved in amorous adventures which recall the fabliaux. Or he shows the relations between workmen and masters, the master's hearty and generous good nature in conflict with the niggardliness of his wife, and his refusal to countenance the housekeeping economies by which she would increase profits. Or again, we see the good journeyman who cannot rest when the spring comes, who asks his master to settle his account and wanders off on the broad highway to seek another shop, humming a merry song as he goes.

Deloney has two manners for the telling of all these stories. For such as are pitched in a lofty or a sentimental key he is wont to have recourse to euphuism, for as a man of the people

he is behind the times. It was some years since the fine language of euphuism had fallen from its place at court and found a home with the class of humbler citizens who were straining to be genteel. But when, as happens more frequently, Deloney paints workshop scenes, making his workmen speak, he uses the clearest and nimblest and also the gayest prose of his time. He is no poet, but he has the gift of good humour, and we owe him the brightest, the most genuinely merry pages of a period in which prose was overdriven by the taste for lyricism or for truculent buffoonery. Although these stories were forgotten for three centuries, they were much appreciated by the author's contemporaries. They were of undoubted service to Dekker, who almost immediately used the life of Simon Eyre for his excellent *Shoemakers Holiday*, and Heywood was probably also indebted to them, since he too greatly desired to gratify the pride of the livery companies. It is true that Deloney's realism is under suspicion. His plans did not allow him to paint any but [illegible]

one of the great forces of England and one of her storehouses of merriment and vitality.

(*e*) Thomas Dekker.—It was Dekker who in the reign of James I succeeded Greene and Nashe as a prose-writer, although his best comedy was inspired by Deloney. He wrote [illegible] He [illegible] which [illegible] James I succeeded her, and one of the great plagues of London occurred. Dekker commemorates these events in a style of which the imagery and truculency recall Nashe and which often is near parody. It might almost be a poem in mock- [illegible]

troops attack, seize the town, massacre men, women, and children, loot and waste. Dekker, who aims at producing a strong effect, is prodigal of macabre description, apostrophes of the plague, and hyperbole, not omitting pedantic

reminiscences; and his very excess of rhetoric weakens the impression, so that we long for those simple, poignant pages in which Defoe was to tell the story of the Great Plague of 1665. The anecdotes with which Dekker relieves the gloom of his picture, and which, for the refreshment of the reader, he chooses for their amusing quality, have more merit, but they throw yet further doubt on the sincerity of the author's emotion. We have, for instance, the story of the cobbler's wife who believes herself at the point of death, and confesses to her husband and neighbours all the infidelities with the husbands of other women of which she has been guilty. Groaning, 'All are sinners,' her husband forgives her. But she recovers, and the wronged wives are getting ready to tear out her eyes when, happily, every one adjourns to the tavern and anger is quenched in Bordeaux wine. The scene ends with a general reconciliation.

The story of the adventure of the wandering tinker who, in a panic-stricken country town, dares, for a crown, to carry to his grave a rich London citizen who has died suddenly at the inn, is also most entertainingly told. The tinker finds seven pounds in the dead man's pocket, and comes back to the village crying, 'Have ye any more Londoners to bury, hey downe dery, have ye any more Londoners to bury?' but the villagers scatter before him in fright.

Dekker is more successful in comedy than in tragedy, as he proves in *The Batchelars Banquet*, a light-hearted version of the *Quinze joies du mariage* and *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*. It is a series of pictures of the miseries of conjugal life, that is of the unhappiness of husbands, invariably represented as good fellows, invariably deceived, and invariably unfortunate. Dekker tells his story vivaciously, retailing conversations between husband and wife, throwing the part of the mother-in-law into relief, and bringing gossips and gay dogs back to life. The realism is often very lively, and would be more convincing were not the author too faithful to the spirit of the fabliau, did he not too persistently take sides against *The Legende of Goode Women*. His women are all wittingly bad. He does not allow one of them to ruin her husband with the best of intentions, to torment him by excessive affection or even by jealousy.

Greene's tracts on the rogues of London are recalled by Dekker's *Belman of London* (1608), and Nashe's *Pierce Penilesse* by his *Seaven Deadly Sinnes of London* (1606), and even

more by his *Newes from Hell brought by the Divells Carrier* (1609). But Dekker had found himself when, in 1609, he wrote the *Guls Horn-Booke,* an ironic guide for a man of fashion who is duper and duped by turns. The Gull is a snob of olden times, an apprentice to the art of profligacy, and he ruffles it for his hour, plucked, the while, by tavern-keepers, swindlers, and women of the street.

re

un

his end without ever departing from that ironic style which has been called grobianism, after *Grobianus,* a work of the German Dedekind (1549), itself much in debt for its manner to Erasmus's *Praise of Folly.* To grobianize is to supply advice or praise which conceals ridicule and shows up the absurdity of its object. Ben Jonson had resort to this device in his comedy *Cynthia's Revels,* and Swift was to make admirable use of it, particularly in his *Directions to Servants in general.*

Dekker's book ranks high in this series. At first he translates *Grobianus;* but he soon emancipates himself sufficiently from its influence to be both local and original. He gives one of the richest of all the pictures of the life of pleasure in Jacobean London, following his Gull from the time he gets

o St. Paul's, then the

debtors pursued by

mpty of pocket and

stomach, 'dine with the good Duke Humphrey,' which is to say that they fast near the monument identified with Humphrey of Gloucester, the son of Henry IV. 'There you may spend your legs in winter a

laugh and talke any thing,

face, and in the evening, ev

display his person and shout his remarks, seated well to the front of the stage at the risk of getting in the way of the actors. He must defy the audience as they yell abuse at

him, yawn at the most pathetic moments in the play, and noisily leave in the very middle, 'with a screwd and discontented face.' Thereafter the Gull goes to the tavern, where he spends much money, and is careful to call the drawers by their Christian names and to appear intimate with the host and hostess. At night he returns home, attended by a boy bearing a lantern, and assuming airs of grandeur in order to deceive passers-by and intimidate the watch.

Dekker's sketches confirm and complete the pictures of London life in the comedies of the time, particularly those of Jonson and Middleton. His prose has lost its heaviness and is excellent. His irony hardly ever flags, is always good-humoured, and is relieved by numerous details of fact of which the presentment is lively and accurate and original by force of its very accuracy. There is nothing left of Nashe's deforming truculency which produced not pictures but caricatures. Dekker is in direct contact with reality, preserves actual proportions, and respects line and colour. He is on the road which leads to the humorists of Anne's reign. From afar he heralds Swift, and chiefly Steele and Addison, for he is a less bitter writer than Swift. Not for a whole century did another author thus combine realism and humour.

2. *The Authors of Characters: Overbury, Stephens, Earle.*—Dekker is less a novelist than a collector, an amateur of manners. Side by side with him certain writers may be placed who drew so-called 'characters,' imitating Theophrastus as La Bruyère did after them. They were closely connected with the satirists in verse, of whom Joseph Hall produced one of the earliest of the imitations of Theophrastus in his *Characters of Vices and Vertues* (1608). It was, however, Sir Thomas Overbury [1] who gave this *genre* a really literary character by the twenty-one prose portraits which he added to his poem *A Wife* (1614). There is wit and point in these drawings of types, of which he praises some while he reveals the vices of others. They are a rapid review of society by a lettered courtier attached to the feudal order and hostile to Puritans.

In 1615 John Stephens, a young lawyer, followed in the steps of Overbury with his *Satyrical Essays, Characters and Others*, as did John Earle (1601?–65) [2] with *Microcosmographie*, which was published in 1628, after it had circulated for some

[1] Ed. W. J. Paylor (Percy Reprints, 1936); entitled *The Overburian Characters*, as being the work of several authors, including the dramatist John Webster. [2] Ed. W. H. D. Rouse (Temple Classics); Harold Osborne (1933).

years in manuscript. This inquiry into society was taken up by author after author, and the resultant picture became more and more complete. In every instance it is noticeable that the search for pointed phraseology and curious turns of speech and the wish to condense led to the advancement of prose. The art of portraiture in words was thus developed in

taste, but in compensation they allowed themselves considerable play of fancy, often with a happy effect.

3. *Dramatic Prose.*—Greene, Nashe, and Dekker were dramatic authors, and the qualities of their prose betray their habit of appealing to a mixed public who demanded nimble speech, either clear or arresting. Other dramatists also produced prose works: Jonson's *Discoveries* is in this medium, as are Thomas Heywood's *Apology for Actors* and *England's Elizabeth*, and Middleton's *Black Book* and *Father Hubbard's Tales*. It is not, however, necessary to go outside the theatre in order to find dramatists' prose, for most of them

among the dramas of the Renascence.

Gascoigne, no later than 1566, in his comedy *Supposes*, translated from Ariosto's *Gli Suppositi*, was the first to forsake verse. Yet for many years afterwards no author resolutely made prose his only medium. John Lyly, who wrote all but one of his plays in prose, is an exception. There is no need to repeat what has been said of the characteristics of his euphuistic style, which he transferred from romance to drama with little modification of its eccentric features, except such as was occasionally necessary to rapid and witty dialogue. But Lyly in this *genre* stands alone. In general, the playwrights of the Renascence varied their medium to suit characters and mood. Most of them alternated verse and prose, and they almost all made it a rule to use, in one play, verse for tragic ... mely and comic scenes. ... a and his *Doctor Faustus*, ... *Bungay*, and Shakespeare in almost all his plays observed their precedent.

Shakespeare rarely keeps the two forms separate, and t plays which he wrote entirely in verse are few. They a *Richard II* and *King John*, for even *Richard III* has a f fragments of prose. He wrote no play all in prose, n even *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, that burgher comedy which prose dominates. His custom was to mingle the t forms. Often the principle of distribution is easy and cle the tragic is reserved for verse and the comic expressed prose. Clowns, and the definitely humorous characters all to clowns, abstain from verse. This is exemplified in *Ro and Juliet*, where the gossiping nurse is almost alone in her of prose, and in *Henry IV*, where all the great historical sce are in verse and all those which centre about Falstaff in pro

Sometimes, however, the alternation of prose and verse much more difficult to explain. In certain passages it is ha to account for it except by a need of variety, but only rar can no other and more subtle artistic reason be discovered justify it. In *Much Ado about Nothing*, for instance, th are two parallel scenes, both mainly comic. In one, Be dick's friends, speaking in his hearing when he believes hi self hidden, contrive that he shall think that Beatrice is love with him. This is in prose. In the other, Beatric cousin and her gentlewoman similarly convince her t Benedick loves her madly, and this is in verse.

These two successive scenes are entirely different in to as a consequence of their difference of form, and reflect shows their diversity to be just and appropriate. Each them gives birth to love in the heart of one of the young peo For Benedick, whose vanity is flattered, this is mainly laughing matter, but it is touching and almost tragic for shy and maidenly girl who cannot admit the feeling with pain and disturbance.

Prose is also the normal medium of certain even of the po characters of Shakespeare, for instance of Rosalind in *As Y Like It*. That this charming heroine of a most fanciful p speaks in prose almost exclusively is at first surprising. I only prose is sudden and swift enough to render her astoni ing flow of imagination and words, her marvellous nimbler of tongue. Rosalind is the most exquisite of chatterbo To make her speech rhythmic would be to make it slower rob it of a little of its spontaneity. The voice would no lon be able to produce the desired effect of words gushing unquenchably.

These facts are simple beside others which can be deduced from the great dramas. It is not at first apparent why one of

Hamlet is in prose, that
sical, paints the contrast
-beast. Hamlet is on the
stage with his false friends whom he suspects to be spies. How is it that the scene, at first familiar in tone and naturally in prose, does not, like so many others in Shakespeare's plays, rise into verse at the great speech, and how is it that even in this highly lyrical effusion we feel prose to be in perfect harmony with the mood? The reason is that Hamlet's words would not have had the air of confidence and carelessness which he was feigning if he had interposed verse between himself and those he addressed. Even while he expresses his pessimism, he remains on his guard against emphasis.

But the most surprising use of prose of all is Othello's, who passes from verse to prose at the most tragic moments, for instance in the first scene of Act IV. It is that in a paroxysm of jealousy, maddened by Iago's lies, he has what is almost an epileptic seizure and his speech, in its incoherence, breaks free of all rhythm. He utters cries rather than words. For an analogous reason prose is introduced into what is perhaps the

point had seemed the natural rhythm of his voice.

Similarly Lear in the height of his madness rejects verse, which is necessarily ruled and reasoned, or adopts it only in brief snatches, in such fragments as he utters when he wanders distractedly in the fields near Dover.

It is nearly always possible to detect in this way the poet's subtle intention when he changes from one form to the other, and to perceive that it is not haste of composition which causes him to forgo verse. Manifestly he is conscious of the value proper to prose, and does not make the mistake of turning it into poetry mechanically, universally, or in defiance of sense.

In confining his clowns to prose, he is giving to special actors the mode of expression proper to their parts, one which has its ritual and traditional rhythm, although not that of verse, indeed a rhythm unworthy to be versified.

In serious passages of his plays he uses prose to produce an eloquence distinct from that of verse, partaking less of imagery and more of ratiocination. Thus Henry V, on the eve of Agincourt, proves to the soldiers that the king is not guilty of their damnation if they die in a state of sin. He speaks like a lawyer, and nothing but prose could have shown his need to exonerate himself, to argue and to prove. Similarly Brutus, rashly appealing to the reason of the Roman people, harangues them in prose, while Mark Antony, when he wishes to rouse them, inflames their passions with admirable verse.

Shakespeare was able to use prose so largely and artistically only because he had cultivated the qualities inherent in it. The extraordinarily nimble speech of Henry V, as he pleads his cause, is surprising beside the rest of sixteenth-century prose and difficult to equal in this generation. In such passages Shakespeare's prose has a ready, certain flow which was never surpassed. It is moreover, true and not poetic prose.

Shakespeare must none the less be classified as a poet who gave some space to prose. His prose is subordinate and the essence of his work and his genius is poetic. It was other playwrights who made prose reign on the stage, especially Ben Jonson, who was a prose-writer first of all, although he often obliged himself to translate his thought into verse and did it vigorously; sometimes, in his songs, even gracefully. Prose was, however, better suited to his robust and realistic temperament, and like a good humanist he formed his prose style carefully, making close translations of Latin passages which struck him during his reading, then altering them slightly, on occasion, to adapt them to existing circumstances. We can watch the process in the curious notebook which he published under the title of *Discoveries*.[1] Nor was this all. He also meditated on the laws of language and wrote the first English grammar; and although the complete version of this work was destroyed in 1623, when his library was burnt, and only his notes for it now remain, they are enough to indicate the analytical bent which made him a contrast to his contemporaries, with their carelessness of rules and their dependence on current uses or inspiration.

[1] Ed. M. Castelain and G. B. Harrison (Bodley Head Quartos, 1923).

A large part of Ben Jonson's plays is in prose. Not only does he nea [illegible] ed with verse, but it [illegible] medies, *Epicoene, or* [illegible] Many will consider that prose suited his talent better than verse, for [illegible]

it is solidly significant, accurate, and often eloquent

Prose was not spoken on the stage only in Shakespeare's and Jonson's plays, and a complete review of the subject would cover the work of almost all the playwrights of the day. But the others were ranged under these two leaders and contributed no new qualities of their own. Enough has been said to show the part of the theatre in the development of prose. It brought it near to everyday speech at a time when it tended either to formlessness or to excessive mannerism, [illegible]

other prose of the dramatists, which was formed on the spoken language and was idiomatic and clear. It was this prose which reappeared half a century later and became general, penetrating to the *genres* to which it did not at first have access.

4. *Literary Criticism.*[1]—Criticism of literature figured considerably in the prose of the English Renascence in point of the number of the works produced, but was of mediocre value and importance. [illegible] by theories [illegible] closely follow [illegible] themselves to the special circumstances of the country and [illegible]

[1] *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. Gregory Smith, 2 vols. (1904) See Saintsbury, *History of Criticism*, vol ii, book iv (1902), and Spingarn, *A History of Literary Criticism in the Renaissance*, part iii (1899)

social hierarchy were shaken, it was in Italy that men of letters first sought to justify their existence and win honour. Criticism had a double aim: it wished both to glorify literature and to proclaim its laws. When the Italians undertook this task, they chose the ancients for their guides. They turned to Aristotle's *Poetics* or Horace's *Ars Poetica*, where they found established the principle of the imitation of nature and the consequent doctrine of reason, objectivity, and classical wisdom. Or they went to Plato, who spoke to them of an ideal of poetic beauty emanating from the individual poet, which led to an imaginative and subjective literature with the characteristics subsequently called romantic. Scaliger, with his *Poetice* of 1561, represents Aristotelian criticism, as Minturno, with his *Ars Poetica* of 1564, stands for Platonic criticism. These two writers did in some sort carry criticism to philosophic heights, but elsewhere in Europe it was humbler, more utilitarian, or more matter-of-fact. In the countries not yet sure of themselves the problem was how to establish the literary claims of the national language so as to awaken ambition. Such was the object of du Bellay in his *Défense et Illustration de la langue française*. In England the moral issue was dominant, the first to be considered and the stimulus to discussion. It had, as early as 1568, the place of honour in Ascham's *Scholemaster*, where it was the motive for opposition to Italianism, which was condemned in the name not of beauty, but of virtue.

But Ascham wrought no change. The corruption of which he denounced the inroads had, ten years later, established itself on English soil, to the scandal of serious and upright men, who tended consequently to regard poetry as synonymous with depravity.

Hence the attack of a man of letters converted to Puritanism, Stephen Gosson, whose *School of Abuse* (1579) is directed against all secular literature, making no distinction between 'Poets, Pipers, Plaiers, Jesters, and such like Caterpillars of a Commonwelth.' His principal animus is against the theatre, but, like the Christian preachers, he extends his condemnation to cover much else. Poets he calls 'the fathers of lyes,' and therefore he considers poetry bad in essence. Anticipating Rousseau, he adds that it is destructive of energy and enervates and effeminates a nation.

This invective has survived because of the retort it provoked. Gosson dedicated it to Sidney, who was known for

his nobility and
the Protestant c
immediately ans

after his death. His plea for poetry constitutes one of the most eloquent and most pleasing prose works of the period.

On the whole, Sidney agrees with Gosson in holding existing English literature cheap, especially English drama, but he condemns it not for reasons of morals, but because the works he considers seem to him weak, mediocre, ridiculous, bereft of art. Of poetry in itself he has the most exalted conception. The poet is for him the first lawgiver, the *vates*, superior both to the historian, who is chained to reality, and to the philosopher, who is obliged to be constantly severe and abstract. The poet paints the ideal with beguiling charm. Far from softening men, poetry has been a chief awakener of the warlike spirit and the virtues of chivalry. Even a popular, ill-rhymed ballad like *Chevy Chase*, 'sung but by some blind crowder with no rougher voice than rude stile,' even the Arthurian romances with all their absurdities, are a call to

poetic, but much less decorated, both franker and more virile, than the *Arcadia*. Sidney makes fun in it of euphuism, proposes Demosthenes and Cicero as models, and protests against the abuse of literary ornaments. 'For now they cast sugar and spice upon every dish that is served at the table: like those Indians, not content to wear ear-rings at the fit and natural place of the ears, but they will thrust jewels through their nose and lips, because they will be sure to be fine.'

In fact, no other critical English work as broad and as much alive was written in this period. All the important questions are stated and treated in it, whereas elsewhere there are only technical treatises and discussions on points of detail. What strikes us especially, when we seek to estimate Sidney's book as a whole, is that from beginning to end he respects the precepts of the ancients and unreservedly condemns the literary methods, his own and those of others, which were practiced in his time. His *Arcadia* is in conflict with his

theory. As much is true of all his contemporaries. No sooner does one of them turn critic, than he adheres to the school of antiquity, careless whether or not his own work obeys the laws he accepts and recommends.

This applies even to Ben Jonson, the playwright who discussed his art most. He poses arrogantly and defiantly as the disciple of the ancients. But while his criticism is after Horace, in practice he treats the theory he professes almost as cavalierly as his rivals, and not only disregards the unities in the strict sense of the word, but mingles the tragic and the comic. Like the others, he presents a series of historical scenes in his *Sejanus* and his *Catiline*, yet seems to imagine that he is writing tragedies in accordance with the rules.

The playwrights who had not, like Jonson, definitely ranged themselves with the humanists, never define their art. But if, exceptionally, they approximate to a theory, they show themselves inclined to echo classical judgments with which their practice is in extreme conflict. Thus Shakespeare mocks merrily at the mingling of the comic and the tragic, making fun of the plays which, like the *Pyramus and Thisbe* of Bottom and his fellows, were full of 'very tragical mirth,' those 'lamentable comedies.' He alludes to the heteroclite taste of his time, jestingly giving the list of the 'historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral,' and the others which were in favour, and he laughs at the artless, rude staging of *Pyramus*, which parodied his own theatre with its childish expedients. Hamlet, unquestionably his mouthpiece, recommends to the players, on wholly classical principles, the fitting, the moderate, and the probable, and is an essentially Aristotelian critic who tolerates clowns with impatience, and since he cannot suppress their part would confine it within strict limits. The play which Hamlet admires and desires to have performed is an oratorical tragedy in the manner of Seneca.

Shakespeare himself doubtless went beyond Hamlet's limitations. Out of his own ideas he chose such as he deemed appropriate to the young prince. Yet while he does not make him voice all his experience as an author, he lends him the more refined of his own opinions, those in agreement with the classical writers. Nowhere does he give utterance to an apology for the so modern and so broad form of drama which he himself followed. He merely, with a smile, admits to his public in the prologue to *Henry V* that he perceives

all the improbabilities of his drama, but counts on their 'imaginary forces' and their goodwill to 'piece out our imperfections with [their] thoughts.'

In addi

and their

Renascen

the comparative merits of measured, or reformed, and rhymed verse. The dispute arose in Italy and France, but it was the occasion in England of a long series of attacks and counter-attacks which prove it to have been waged in this country with more heat than elsewhere. It is remarkable that the first antagonists of rhyme were so carried away by their cult of antiquity that they disregarded the existence of blank verse, which seemed to them a bastard and inadequate compromise. They wished, at the same time, to abolish rhyme, which they held to be Gothic and barbarous, and they claimed to make

rt as in Latin. Some

vaunted the iambic

ned the hexameter.

It can serve no purpose to speak of the unreadable poems

Campion, author of so many charming rhymed songs, was in the enemy camp in 1602. In his *Observations on the Art of English Poesie* he condemns rhyme as improper to poetry. The only good effect of his attack was that it induced the poet Samuel Daniel to write his *Defence of Ryme* (1603), which closed this controversy of more than thirty years' standing and was the first example in England of sane aesthetic criticism applied to a special subject. Hitherto all the blows had been aimed wide. On either side there had been pedantry, abuse of authoriti

verse, even

rhythm anc

ness, and p

it is worth

on uses. While he denies that the admission of rhyme, which exists and pleases many nations, is a matter for discussion, he does not shirk the task of founding rhyme on reason. He does not bow down before the ancients. That rhyme makes rhythm of a kind unknown to them is, he says, their loss, who knew not this 'Echo of a delightful report.' Nor does rhyme exclude measure from English verse, which is based on tonic accent. To complain of the shackles of rhyme is to ignore the nature of the pleasure of poetry and of its creation. The poet finds that 'Rhyme is no impediment to his conceit, but rather gives him wings to mount, and carries him not out of his course, but as it were beyond his power to a far happier flight.' Rhyme is a means of imparting form, outline, and limits to imaginative conceptions. It organizes chaos. Its terminal cadence gives 'a certainty' as well as measure.

Daniel has a secret preference for the stanza over the couplet, and he would reserve feminine rhymes for songs. But these are personal tastes, as he himself knows and says, and modestly refuses to erect them into law. It was doubtlessly his fondness for the stanza rather than the couplet which prevented the classical school from acknowledging him as one of the best of their forerunners.

His own moderation impels him to condemn the intransigence of those who would, at one stroke, rule out all the past. But in him this moderation is accompanied by frank independence. He throws off the yoke of antiquity:

> All our understandings are not to be built by the square of Greece and Italie. We are the children of Nature as well as they, we are not so placed out of the way of judgment, but that the same Sunne of Discretion shineth upon us. . . . Wee must not looke upon the immense course of times past, as men overlooke spacious and wide countreys, from off high mountaines, and are never the neerer to judge of the true nature of the soile.

From end to end of his short treatise Daniel unfolds his argument in the same wise and reasonable spirit. His pleading, often directed against the superstition of the humanists, is finely classical in form. It is oratory, less poetic and nervous than the language of Sidney's *Defence*, at times a little redundant, but exceptional in this period by its sequence, its logic, and its urbanity. More than any one of his contemporaries, Daniel possessed the qualities of the perfect writer of prose.

5. *Religious Prose. Hooker. The Preachers. The Bible.* (*a*) THE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN THE PURITANS AND THE

famous of the disputes which occupied authors was that in which the Calvinists engaged the Anglican Church, the so-called Martin Marprelate controversy.[1] It began in 1588 and lasted for at least five years. The Marprelates used their secret printing-presses, easily moved and impossible to seize, to bring out a multitude of anonymous pamphlets, of which the authorship is still an almost complete mystery, and in which, with insulting irony, they denounced the bishops as swine, Canterbury Beelzebubs, antichrists, foxes, dogs. The attack had a popular

political satire, the

had punning titles a

Anglican replies struck the same note. The bishops, with temporal arms at their disposal, found other defenders among the men of letters, who instinctively execrated and feared the Martinists or Puritans as enemies of secular literature. These champions of Anglican orthodoxy had no religious convictions, but they loved a fight. They were the *condottieri* of this war. They defended episcopacy in the taverns. Thomas Nashe, the disciple of Aretino, is the best known of them. The leading

them th

of their

stocks v

subjected to severe regulation

(*b*) Richard Hooker.[2]—Anglicanism was also able to make another and less brutal retort to its detractors, to adopt a persuasive tone and give reasons for its doctrine. The

He was a man of humble birth whose parents at first in-

[1] Ed. E. Pierce (1911).

[2] *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, ed. Church and Paget (1888), book i, ed. Church (1876); book v, ed. R. Bayne (1902); book viii, ed. R. A. Houk (New York, 1931). Life in *Walton's Lives* (World's Classics, 1927).

took orders, and in 1584, when he was Master of the Temple, he was drawn into a controversy with the Puritan Travers. Afterwards, instead of seeking honours, Hooker begged as a favour for a country living where he might 'behold God's blessings spring out of my mother earth, and eat my own bread without oppositions.' The dispute he had sustained had obliged him to probe and to order his ideas. In rural quiet and retirement he composed his great defence of the established Church of England. Izaak Walton has charmingly told the story of the life of this sage, or rather this saint, candid, shy, and kind, helpless against malice and ruled and bullied by an ill-tempered wife, reading Horace while he tended his flock. His brain was, however, no less vigorous than his temper was gentle and docile. He boldly establishes as a principle that the attitude of compromise, which has given the enemies of the Church of England matter for so much reproach, is nothing else than a mark of wisdom.

To the extremists who referred everything to the Bible; Hooker retorts that man receives God's teaching from two sources—revelation in the Bible and reason, which is the gift of God. If these two ever seem to be in conflict, it is reason which must be followed. Reason is God's first-born child, and finds everywhere in nature the law which has existed from the beginning, which God gave even to Himself and observed when He created and ordained the world. God is supreme reason. All God's law is a law of reason, and every law of reason is a law of God.

As for the Bible, it reveals the supernatural truths which man could not have discovered by reason alone. It is an additional but not the only light. Hooker deems that man should be guided by all the instruments of knowledge which he possesses, together and concurrently. Papistry appeals to the authority of the Church against reason. Puritanism is essentially an appeal to the authority of the Bible against the Church and against reason also. The Church of England effects a required reconciliation, for it admits the authority of precedents and yet recommends obedience to the Bible, but teaches that all must be controlled by reason.

Starting from these principles, which are very like those held by Pecock in the previous century, Hooker was able to defend the hierarchy and discipline of his Church against the Puritans, who attacked them as unscriptural, and he could similarly defend the ritual and uses which the Puritans con-

sidered superstitious. He holds that the Bible dictates no certain laws for the ecclesiastical and the civil polity, and that positive laws are partly susceptible of change. But since he finds reason plainly reflected in existing societies, since they evidently obey a law, he defends them against the attempts which were being made to disturb and confound them. He clearly illustrates the conservatism of the Anglican religion.

His book is eminent not only for its ratiocination and the knowledge it shows, but also for its consistently noble and lofty tone, and the amplitude of its construction which owes much to the *Summa* of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Yet its atmosphere is not the special and exclusive one of theological treatises, for Hooker is at least half a philosopher, and no one has done homage to human reason more finely than he.

The book is also remarkable for its style. For the first time English and not Latin is used for high generalization

the less this prose is luminous and harmonious, and equally removed from pedantry and from vulgarity. It is strictly ruled by logic and aims at convincing the reason, yet it is not without passages which impress the imagination. It is Hooker who first brought the prose of his own language to rank with that of antiquity.

His teaching was fated to be neglected and his cause to be defeated in the seventeenth century, but, besides the success of his book in his own day, he received compensation

remains the distinctive mark of that religion of England to which he was the first Father of the Church. And outside

balanced attitude, the same grave eloquence expressed in periods, were shown in Hooker's sermons. His diffidence may have prevented them from having all their rightful effect at the time of their delivery, but they are strong though they appeal less to reason and more to conscience and feeling than his book. The serenity he displays in them is in contrast with the invectives of his contemporaries against the new

Babylon. Hooker was courageous and broad-minded enough to affirm the Church of Rome to be the true and sanctified Church of Christ. Far from incriminating Catholicism, he searches it for points of agreement.

He was not, however, the most renowned preacher of his day. Public favour was accorded first to Bishop Andrewes, and then, a little later, to John Donne, both of whom were typical preachers of the age, by their defects as by their qualities.

Bishop Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626) [1] was a very learned theologian who knew fifteen languages, who, as a philosopher, was appreciated and consulted by Bacon, and who was as famous for his wit as for his charity. His wit was, however, affected by the fashions of the age: he liked to lapse into conceits and plays on words; and he weighted his prose with pedantry, scraps of Latin and Greek. His homilies made him, for his contemporaries, the Star of Preachers and the Angel of the Pulpit, and until the advent of Jeremy Taylor and Tillotson he remained the favourite of his Church. But a change in taste has dimmed his former repute. He inveighed against rhetoric, and yet was far too ready to make sacrifices for rhetorical effect, and part of his success was undoubtedly due to the perfection of his diction.

In the early seventeenth century only John Donne [2] shared his renown. Donne carried into his sermons the strange 'metaphysical' subtlety which marks his verses. He considered that the preacher should not speak with 'an extemporal or irreverent or over-homely and vulgar language.' Certainly he put into his sermons his fantastic rhetoric, and his erudition, his knowledge of the Fathers of the Church, particularly Saint Augustine. The obscurity of the preacher is no less conspicuous than that of the poet. He is prodigal of similes and metaphors; he does not always seem clearly to know whither he is bound or where he leads his hearers; his macabre imagination is betrayed by his constant and willing returns to the themes of death and the Judgment. Some of his sentences are quoted as admirable for their rhythm and emphasis, but there is not one of his sermons which exacts admiration as a whole.

[1] Collected works ed. by L. P. Wilson (Oxford, 1841–54); *Two Sermons of the Resurrection* (Cambridge, 1932); *Preces Privatae*, ed. by F. E. Brightman (1903). See T. S. Eliot, *For Lancelot Andrewes* (1928).

[2] *Donne's Sermons, Selected Passages*, ed. L. P. Smith (1919); *Ten Sermons*, ed. G. G. Keynes (1923); *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, ed. J. W. Sparrow (1923), and W. H. Draper (1925). See Evelyn Simpson, *A Study of the Prose Works of John Donne* (Oxford, 1924).

(*d*) The Bible of 1611.[1]—Nothing else in the religious prose of the Renascence is equal in literary beauty and importance to the 1611 Authorized Version of the Bible. From Anglo-Saxon times onwards there had been many previous translations of the Scriptures, but this one remained intact and was accepted by all Protestant sects for nearly three centuries. It was not the first time that Hebrew literature [illegible] ation, but it happened [illegible] which the [illegible] le, became [illegible] ore, at this [illegible] the minds [illegible]

It is perhaps especially necessary to [illegible] the influence of the Old Testament, for the Gospels had always been widely known throughout Christendom, independently of the Reformation. Moreover, it was the Old Testament which chiefly placed its imprint on Puritan minds and fashioned them. The Old Testament is the history of an Oriental people, the fruit of the religious genius of the Hebrew race. Like the Jews, the English were, even before the triumph of Puritanism, prone to consider themselves the chosen people As early as 1580 Lyly had said that 'the living God is only the English God.' This opinion, with all the intensity, the enthusiasm, the narrowness, the exclusiveness, and, on occasion, the pitilessness it implied, became general in the seventeenth century. Psalm cxxxvi, with its exaltation of the divine *mercy* which 'smote Egypt in their first-born,' 'overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea,' and 'slew famous kings,' expresses admirably the frame of mind in which Cromwell's soldiers went to battle. This unconscious and blind exclusiveness must be numbered among the foundations of the modern English mentality. The Bible strengthened the religious and moral sense of the English, but, at the same time, it drew about them moral and religious limitations almost as narrow as those which confined the Jews.

This Jewish history, on which millions of the English henceforward meditated and which they assimilated, was conveyed to them in stories, lyrical poems, and prophecies. The Old

[illegible]

(1911).

N

Tindale, and Coverdale. It is a religious language at the heart

voices, to be marked as sacred among the rest of their speech.

The Authorized Version of 1611 was the work of forty-seven scholars, nominated by James I, over whom Bishop Lancelot Andrewes presided. It was declared to have been produced at the king's special command and to be appointed to be read in churches. It was also adopted by the Puritans in preference to the so-called Geneva Bible.

instance, from its habitual faults. The shortness of the verses compelled restraint, and hemmed the language in from over-

admirable qualities, the Bible of 1611 had enormous defects which did not fail to retain a long hold on the minds and therefore on the prose of many Englishmen. Partly because of the obscurity of the original texts, and partly because of many mistranslations of sense, the Authorized Version contains numerous quite unintelligible passages, verses, and expressions, not to speak of the many places in which the disjointedness of Oriental thought is disconcerting to European minds.

Since it was the accepted Word of God, readers in their

which

sense,

secret

revelation of a doctrine necessary to their salvation in words which had been coupled together by faithful translators at their wits' end. Think of the numbers who, by ingenious deductions, read their own wishes or desires into a sibylline verse of the Scriptures. Or, not to leave the strict limits of literature, imagine this Book of Books, with its thousand strange and obscure expressions, accepted as the norm, developing the taste for broken, apocalyptic language.

Examples could be cited of countless passages in which piety or discretion impelled the English translators to render the Hebrew literally, without daring to introduce any meaning which they had not the wit to discover in their original. We will mention only the mysterious epithet 'fearful in praises' applied to God in Exodus xv. ii, or the verse which in the Book of Job refers to the divine might, 'If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?' (Job xi. 10).

Probably assiduous reading of the Bible is largely responsible for the troubled and confused eloquence, interrupted by images violently subversive of logic, of which some English writers have been guilty. Fortunately, the dangers of following the scriptural model were combated by that great respect for strict reason which marked the classical period, already at hand, the period of analysis and ratiocination. Its first signs were perceptible when the Authorized Version appeared, and, after the Puritan Age, the reign of the understanding was established almost without contest. Two currents of thought, one mystical and the other rationalistic, flowed through the seventeenth century, and were sometimes separate and sometimes merged in each other. By 1611 the poetic fervour of the Renascence had cooled or been transformed. Bacon's work was a counterpoise to the Bible, or rather the practical and utilitarian spirit which led to the foundation of the Royal Society for Improving Natural Knowledge was balanced by the diffusion of biblical poetry.

The result was a literature which had a double inspiration and double aspect, the two being complementary rather than antagonistic to each other. It is due to the Bible that English was less deeply modified by analysis and by grammatical definition than French, then embarking, with Malherbe, the *précieuses*, and the grammarians, on the road to somewhat dry simplification. The Bible was the great force which perpetuated in English, even in English prose, elements of poetry and of quaintness and a certain chiaroscuro, and which also

maintained in thought a mysticism and an imagi
increasingly threatened by strict rationalism
remembered that Great Britain is the land
Society, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Adam Sm
mists and the utilitarians, the country in whic
the practical and the positive, implanted by
has perhaps taken deepest root, the immense
understood of the Bible which kept poetry ali

concerned with philosophy and morals. F
(1561–1626) never speaks of religion except wit
seems himself to have been religious, for he
very beautiful prayers for his own use and
Anglican faith. But his work had no co
theology or even with Christian morality. It
of a free spirit, of thought which adventures
discovered by itself. He is the first in date
philosophers and one of the most eminent and
of them. Moreover, he is one of the pionee
philosophy in all countries.

The contrast between his great intellect anc

acknowledge himself guilty of corrupt and ab
of his office, could be summed up by Pope a
brightest, meanest of mankind.' While it ma
that there were extenuating circumstances to
is impossible to deny that he made friendship ai
subordinate to his career. This low ambition
, the desire
early, whil
of the sch
which lead to verbal controversy but never to

[1] Complete edition by Spedding, Ellis, and Heath, 14 vols.

then conceived the idea of a mission beside which all the acts of his practical life sank almost to insignificance:

I found in my own nature a special adaptation for the contemplation of truth. For I had a mind at once versatile enough for that most important object—I mean the recognition of similitudes—and at the same time sufficiently steady and concentrated for the observation of subtle shades of difference. I possessed a passion for research, a power of suspending judgment with patience, of meditating with pleasure, of assenting with caution, of correcting false impressions with readiness, and of arranging my thoughts with scrupulous pains. I had no hankering after novelty, no blind admiration for antiquity. Imposture in every shape I utterly detested. For all these reasons I considered that my nature and disposition had, as it were, a kind of kinship and connection with truth. (The original text is in Latin.)

His first object was to acquire the knowledge which increases man's empire over the earth. At thirty years old he wrote to Burleigh: 'I have as vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends; for I have taken all knowledge to be my province.'

Little by little, he elaborated the doctrine which he formulated in 1620 in his *Novum Organum*. He declared science to be one, and to have a practical object.

We are concerned not with pure skill in speculation, but with real utility and the fortunes of the human race. . . . For man is no more than the servant and interpreter of Nature; what he does and what he knows is but that which he has observed of the order of Nature in act or in thought; beyond this he knows nothing and can do nothing. For the chain of causes cannot be relaxed or broken by any force, and Nature cannot be commanded except by being obeyed.

Since the obstacles to the attainment of this power, which depends on science, are ignorance and error, the causes are analysed of error or the tendencies to error existing in the human mind, and here given the Platonic name of idols of the intelligence. Bacon takes pleasure in subdividing these idols into those of the tribe, the cave, the market-place, and the theatre, using a curious symbolism which bears the mark of the Elizabethan age. Then he determines the true method, establishing the importance of an objective attitude to nature, and the necessity of systematic experiment, and of caution against precipitate conclusion, 'for the subtlety of nature is many times greater than the subtlety of our logic.' The passage from particular facts to general laws should always be made by prudent and successive degrees.

True science is the knowledge of causes, which Bacon, like

Aristotle, divides into material and efficient cau physical, and formal and final causes in the me sphere.
rather th
of search,
It is the thing itself, the object in its relation to m his senses and understanding, as opposed to the o sidered in its relations to the universe. These limited in number and are the alphabet of natur fore it is possible to hope that science and philo in the future be complete. The great matter is instances, that is facts, after which the inductive m be followed with security. A beginning can be mad hypothesis which yields the first 'vintage.'

Although Bacon may often go astray in his sc

effect on English thought, not, however, immedi after half a century. The Royal Society for Natural Knowledge emanated from Bacon and was of the establishment of the Baconian spirit in the the nation.

In the meanwhile, this man, who opened up new to the understanding of his fellow-countrymen, with the Middle Ages and made so bold a step for modern times, was chained to the past by his lang was convinced that 'these modern languages will at or other play the bankrowtes with books,' and he

and pamphlets. One hundred years after Thom

time every literary *genre* was exemplified in the national literature. It is the more surprising because he could handle English prose so surely and vigorously that he became, in spite of himself, one of the first prose-writers of his country.

He cannot be said to owe this place to his *New Atlantis*, a painfully didactic and awkwardly written description of a new Utopia inhabited by scholars after Bacon's own heart. The most characteristic monument of the imaginary island is 'Salomon's House,' or the 'College of the Six Days' Works,' which is a sort of anticipation of the Royal Society and similarly destined to 'the producing of great and marvellous works for the benefit of men.' In its turrets for observing depth and height, and in its dissecting and vivisecting halls, audacious researches were conducted, some of which were afterwards realized, although the fantastic nature of others has become apparent. This novel is, in fact, Bacon's philosophy of science presented in romantic form by a writer without the gift for romance of which Thomas More received so fortunate a share.

The *History of Henry the Seventh* is stylistically much more remarkable. It was written, to please James I, in praise of his ancestor, the first Tudor sovereign, but it had all the gravity suited to an historical work. Bacon's sagacity often appears in it, and was to show itself more clearly in the portraits of Henry VIII and Elizabeth which he left behind him. No other favourable and admiring picture of the queen is as good.

It was, however, by his *Essays* that Bacon proved himself a great writer of his own language. Their title, although not their spirit, recalls Montaigne's masterpiece. While Montaigne is copious, familiar, prodigal of confidences, interested in everything, prone to philosophize on whatever relates to man, Bacon is curt, almost sibylline, entirely impersonal, and averse from pure speculation. He deduces general maxims only from the observations he has himself been able to make. He writes only for courtiers and statesmen like himself. His manner is intermediate between that of Montaigne's essays and that of the maxims of La Rochefoucauld. He supplies short dissertations wholly sententious in form, supported by quotations from the ancients but founded on direct observation. The construction is stiff and formal. Like a good lawyer, Bacon, with an air of complete impartiality, balances opposing arguments before he draws his conclusion.

Their essential merit lies in the density of the thought and expression, the frequent brilliancy of the poetic images, inserted never as ornaments but always to emphasize an idea, and the impressive loftiness of the oracular tone.

The moral is that set forth in the *Novum Organum*, and the design is practical and utilitarian. There are in fact two morals rather than one. Good for Bacon has a double character, according to whether it be considered relatively to the individual or to the state. He is strongly imbued with Machiavellism, and praises Machiavelli for describing what men do, not what they should do. He is doubtless aware of the difference between virtue and interest. He d[illegible] v[illegible] s[illegible] play on the stage of social life, as is indicated in the subtitle of his book: *Counsels Civil and Moral.* Baudouin, its first French translator, was right to call it *L'Artisan de la Fortune.*

Within these limits the *Essays* have singular force and weight. No one has ever produced a greater number of closely packed and striking formulas, loaded with practical wisdom. Many of them have become current as proverbs. Other maxims, either coined by Bacon directly or translated from his Latin, can be extracted from all his works and added to those in the *Essays*. The value of some depends entirely on their wisdom and its forcible expression:

> [illegible] death.
>
> Lookers-on many times see more than the gamesters

Others are remarkable by their images, at once large and terse:

> Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark, and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other

To show that religion is degraded by the shedding of blood, he says:

> Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven, and to set out of the barque of a Christian Church a flag of a barque of pirates and assassins

These *Essays* are the first in date of the classics of English

and the arduous work of collecting all the allusions to his affliction which his endless reading revealed. Had he followed his own inclination he would, like Bacon, have clothed his work in Latin, rather than 'prostitute my muse in English.' But since the 'mercenary stationers' would have none of a book in the learned language, he had to fall back on the vulgar tongue. The result of his lengthy labours was an enormous quarto volume, followed, during the seventeenth century, by seven folio editions. The title is characteristic: *The Anatomy*

Causes, Symp-
hree Maine
and Sub-

Nihil meum.

The book contains indeed nothing which was Burton's own, for he pillaged all known books. Yet everything in it became his because he chose it and because his temperament infused into the whole a sort of unity.

was not the gentle companion
n, contemplating
l petting her own
To the men of
the Renascence ss; it was *black bile*, according to the strict Greek meaning of the word, and was the doctor's affair. The distance which separated melancholy from madness was short, and while Burton sometimes distinguishes between the two, he often confuses them.

The melancholy of Shakespeare's Jaques in *As You Like It*
irony,
ght of
s into
satire against man A ... s goes on his way culling instances and proofs of human foolishness, madness, and perversity. Shakespeare disowns him, finally letting Rosalind scoff at him and turn him out. If George Sand, adapting Shakespeare's comedy, made Jaques into the wise and beneficent philosopher of the piece, it was because Rousseau had formed her mind and she could neither understand nor approve melancholy as it was conceived by a man of the Renascence.

Burton, Democritus Junior, devotes his book, which is a methodically constructed as a scholastic treatise, to an enumeration of all the forms which melancholy can assume to darken the life of man. He treats of religious melancholy which the Puritans were beginning to exemplify, and of the melancholy of love-sickness. His *Anatomy* is in fact a vas picture of human folly. It echoes not only the attack of the ancient Democritus, but also the satires of antiquity, those for instance, of Lucian, and also more recent invectives Sebastian Brant's *Ship of Fools*, Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and, in part, More's *Utopia*, not to mention numerous sarcasm taken from Rabelais and Montaigne. 'Thou shalt soon perceive that all the world is mad, that it is melancholy, dotes, and Burton finds that its madness recurs in all ages and countries, at all times of life and in every condition. Customs uses, occupations, tastes, actions, and words prove this abundantly. The existence of war bears overwhelming witness to it, and he dwells long on the madness of war, thus following More and anticipating La Bruyère and Swift, with less passion and eloquence than theirs, but with an extraordinary array of particular examples, annotations, and quotations.

His reflections on his own country are curious. He first praises its prosperity and its learned king, James I, 'another Numa, a second Augustus, a true Josiah.' But he then shows the other side of the picture, the state of Ireland, which he calls a 'dishonour to our nation,' and of England, where the land seems to him uncultivated and miserable in comparison with industrious Holland. He declares idleness to be the scourge of England. 'Idleness is the *malus Genius* of our nation.' The Englishman will not work. Burton escapes from his grief to a Utopia, imagining a country in which every material improvement should have been effected. Yet he is not fantastic, but keeps clear of communism, ably defending the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy.

In such digressions he shows himself a reasonable man, but more often his good sense is cloaked by eccentricity and his wisdom disguised as humour. This frenzied compiler, this scholar quoting endlessly, this writer of prose who recoups himself for his abstention from Latin by introducing numerous Latin expressions into his sentences, does not take himself entirely seriously. On occasion he makes fun of himself and his brother pedants. He can scoff at antiquaries and philo-

to make a parade of knowledge by means of the whole spoliation of this great folio, neglected by every one exc Doctor Johnson, whose daily reading it was. In the ni teenth century Burton's reputation was revived by Char Lamb, who rendered him a sort of cult, composing a pastic of his style in *Curious Fragments*, and amusing himself imitating his methods in his own essays.[1]

A little of Burton's eccentricity and pedantry marks near all the prose of these fifty years. It lacked the clear, eve simplicity which to the French is the proper characterist of true prose. It was not yet entirely distinct from poetr But it was tending noticeably to conquer more and mor ground. In spite of the resistance of Latin, it had extende its sphere to include more diverse subjects. It embrace theology; it touched on philosophy; it made definite conques of literary criticism; and it annexed the moral essay and the 'characters.' It shared the elasticity of the novel, could be romantic, sentimental, realistic, or comic. It had already an important part in the theatre. It had learnt to relate and to discuss. It could mock and it could be serious. When the poverty and uncertainty of prose before 1578 is remembered, its rapid progress is striking, and seems almost to equal the advance made by poetry. The victory of the Puritans interrupted its employment in the light and frivolous kinds of literature, which disappeared until the Restoration, but the generation of the middle of this century used a prose which, while less diverse, attained in the higher kinds of literature to a magnificent development of those qualities of eloquence, strength, and amplitude already apparent in some of the prose-writers we have reviewed.

[1] English literature has a partial claim to John Barclay (1582-1621), who was born at Pont-à-Mousson of a Scottish father and French mother, and wrote in Latin his picaresque romance, *Euphormionis Satyricon* (1603-7), and his more famous historical *roman à clef*, *Argenis* (1617), dedicated to Louis XIII. The latter work is, however, mainly concerned with France and had there its chief success, which gave an impulse to the pseudo-historical romances of the middle seventeenth century. In fact, Barclay was the typical cosmopolitan writer of the time, and his use of Latin, the only cosmopolitan language, is characteristic.

CHAPTER V

THE DRAMA UNTIL SHAKESPEARE, FROM 1580 TO 1592[1]

1. *Fertility of the Drama. The Difficulty of Tracing its Evolution.*—Rich as are all the manifestations of the English literature of the Renascence, its highest glory and the most direct and original expression of the national genius are dramatic. Elsewhere imitation and artifice play a part; aristocratic sentiment or an ephemeral fashion is a check on spontaneity, ruling out whatever is of the people, or colouring style or subject to make it archaic, euphuistic, Arcadian, or pastoral. On occasion, the greatest authors pride themselves on exclusiveness. Spenser writes with his eyes on the court, especially on its lords and ladies. Shakespeare, dazzled by the friendship of the young Earl of Southampton, heads *Venus and Adonis* with two arrogant lines from Ovid: 'Let the mob admire what is vile; to me may fair Apollo serve cups filled with water of Castalia.' The influence of antiquity and of foreign countries, especially Italy, is everywhere so noticeable, that only rarely do we receive an immediate and broad impression of the English genius. Everything bears a little the mark of a restricted public, a set or a coterie. The sonneteers, the anacreontic poets, and the various humanists do not wholly belong to their country, but owe allegiance also to foreign writers who inspire them and whose rivals they are.

¶ The theatre was open to all: the whole town was attracted by it and enthusiastic for it. It was truly national. For many it took the place of the church they neglected; to most, in this time of no newspapers and few and little-read novels, it was the only source of intellectual pleasure. A secular

[1] General works: A. W. Ward, *History of English Dramatic Literature to*

decline of blank verse. Stiff at first, it gradually became

natural death. It was executed when it was still very much alive, so much so that the executioner was unequal to his task, and that twenty years later the alleged corpse was resuscitated, and promptly resumed, under the Restoration,

ta and dates which

He has to base his arguments on the extant plays without knowing how many have been lost. Thomas Heywood alone, who claimed to have written 220 plays, left only thirty-five to posterity. The chronology of numerous dramatic works is purely conjectural. The life and character of the authors are almost entirely unknown. Many of them are no more than names, and there

and Rowley's, Dekker's and Webster's?

It is impossible to follow with certainty the individual history of each playwright, or each company of actors who had a repertory, or each theatre which had a public. In spite of the considerable efforts which have been made, the unknown remains vaster than the known.

which was wont purposely to mingle genres in one play, aiming at variety rather than harmony.

We are brought back to search for a central figure, and to group about Shakespeare, incontestably the greatest of all,

There were no wings and no back-scenery, and only the simplest accessories—table, chairs, shrubs—to indicate or rather symbolize the place of the action. Sometimes it was merely intimated on a placard to such as could read. The front stage served almost all purposes so long as it was not necessary to represent a special place. Many scenes in Elizabethan plays pass in a vague, indeterminate place, in a street or public square, before a house or in an unspecified room.

The back stage was used for places which had a special and distinct character. The curtain at the back rose to discover persons in a particular attitude, for instance [illegible]

[illegible] stage with scenery which was erected behind the front curtain and became increasingly multifarious, large and complicated.

C [illegible] imp [illegible] Att [illegible] or g [illegible] emphasizing the value of the numerous monologues, the multiplied tirades of the plays of the period. His art was therefore carried to a high pitch. English actors had at this time a reputation which reached the Continent, whither they were invited and where some of them made long tours. There were no actresses: women's parts were played by boys. All the prestige which belongs to an actress went to the actors, and more than one citizen's wife was fascinated by them. [illegible]

[illegible] cultivated by persons whose acquaintance was most flattering to their vanity. They had a good chance to make their fortunes if, amid the dangerous temptations of their calling, they lived an orderly life and preserved a practical point of

surviving companies were under the patronage of members of the royal family, he was at the head of the Queen's and the Prince's companies.

3. *The Plays. The Public.*[1]—In 1580 the theatres possessed a repertory of plays already studied and others like them.

and popular productions, for although at heart he was, as his *Arcadia*

critic th:

Castelve·

knew nothing of decorum with the law of the unities and the law which separates the tragic and the comic, and he energetically ridiculed the absurdities entailed by changes of scene and time:

two hours' space.

Sidney has the penetration to perceive the law by which the English playwrights were unconsciously governed. They believed themselves to be historians, and followed events step by step, forgetting the prerogatives of art which does not obey literal truth and which has the task of rearranging, eliminating, combining, constructing.

In this Sidney goes straight to the root of the matter. Quite

[1] C. J. Sisson, *Le Goût public et le théâtre élisabéthain* (Dijon, 1922).

ısement yet willing to be edified or instructed, endowed ι curiosity at once ingenuous and ardent, and with ation which easily moved them to tears or shouts of er. Neither squeamish nor sceptical, they blindly ed flights of lyricism which went beyond their compren, readily submitted to illusion, and did not grudge njoyment. Such is a mixed popular audience in every y. It is an ideal, a grateful audience, perhaps the best to appreciate the essentials of drama, namely the life e human truth of its pictures.

as the necessity of satisfying it which determined the ter of the English drama of the Renascence. Its e variety gave birth to the profound difference which orth distinguished this drama from that of France.

herto too much has been attributed to race as a factor

opposite direction towards Racine, because the French vas in love with beautiful proportions, harmony, fine is, and nobility. To this theory there is the objection hese two contrasting nations, which seem at this time

mysteries which in both their countries not only had me religious subjects, but were also closely akin in form n the spectacles they provided Moreover, France in iddle Ages seems to have taken the lead in this matter, o have supplied the earliest dramatic models. How she evolve out of herself what was less fitted to her genius than to that of a neighbouring nation, England, accepted and kept what she gave? How could she, gously, build for centuries the most marvellous of all othic cathedrals before she recognized that her natural

popular drama, while England still preserved almost all its elements. The difference was rather in the public of the theatre in the two countries than in the national temperaments. The English theatre was still open to all men and made for them all. But the drama of the French Renascence took form after a police regulation, intended to check disorder, had in 1548 forbidden in France any popular performances of the mysteries, and therefore it was both new and a thing apart. It was subject to no influences except those of antiquity, and its appeal was to a select public of humanists and literates, with a due admixture of pedants. Nothing was left to the people but the farces and the clowning of the fairs. What was at its origin shared indiscriminately by all the people of both countries, was in France cut for a long period in two halves, with the result that the court and the literate class, the men bred on Greek and Latin, engrossed all that was noblest, while the people had the rest. For it is improbable that there was ever a large number of workmen who understood *Cinna* and acclaimed *Mithridate*. It is no more than just to credit accident with what accident mainly accomplished.

Nor can it be doubted that in England there were velleities towards a break between the art of the aristocracy and of the people. The court was greedy of dramatic representation, and some playwrights addressed themselves to satisfying the more refined tastes of the queen and the courtiers. It was naturally at the court or before the court that truly artistic drama was first attempted. The popular theatre, left to itself, threatened to persevere in disorder and coarseness, and could still be careless of elegance and style. It is in plays written for the court that these qualities, without which drama can be intensely alive but cannot survive as literature, are first plainly discernible. Since there was at this time constant intercourse between the court and the city, actors passed from the one to the other, and the same play was often given before the queen and the people in turn, so that progress stimulated by one audience was soon afterwards enjoyed by the other also. The benefit soon became general, but the search for the beautiful manifestly originated in the more cultured of the two spheres.

4. *The Plays of John Lyly.*[1]—John Lyly's plays were the

[1] For complete works and critical studies see *supra*, p. 258. *Campaspe* is printed in Manly's *Specimens*, vol. ii; there is a separate edition of *Endymion*, ed. by A. P. Baker (1894).

to provide models of refinement, or at least the first of hat have come down to us. For Lyly was not the first ate of the court purveyors. It is calculated that from time of Elizabeth's accession seven plays were, on an age, given before her every year, and that about one dred and fifty had been thus performed before Lyly's ent. Almost all of them have been lost except *Gorboduc* 2), *Damon and Pythias* (1564) and *Tancred and Gismunda* 6). We know of the rest only from the records of the e of the Revels, the master of the revels having the duty providing masques, dances, and plays for the queen's rsion. He had to examine plays which were to be perned in her presence, whether written on purpose for her hosen among such as had had success with the public. he subsisting titles of the lost plays, so many are classical nythological that their habitual subjects are revealed.

rs Theatre before it was given in the queen's presence on December 1581, but it seems to have been written with ew to Elizabeth's pleasure, as were most of his later plays

kes what
eople, a
regard-
annered,

ter, he addresses himself to fine lords and fair ladies. gives them the treat of hearing, on the stage, the antithetic e and decorative similes of that prose which was, and which ained for some ten years, the admiration of the fashionable ld. No work ever bore its author's imprint more plainly n Lyly's. Each of his plays has a harmony and atmosphere per to himself.

he most decided improvement due to him arose from his ice of prose as a medium, and a prose which, for all its ficiality, aimed at beauty. In face of the prevailing rchy in the matter of literary form, he chose this one of two solutions possible to him. He wrote too well, too borately, and by too factitious methods, but in witty ogue he attained to true art. His drama consists, for t matter, almost entirely of dialogue, for his plots are

onversations
xample of a

man of Syracuse, is endowed, by a caprice of Venus, with unmatched beauty and rendered at the same time insensible to love. On the other hand, the goddess has pierced with an arrow the heart of the chaste Princess Sapho, of whose beauty she is jealous and whose chastity angers her. Sapho, crossing the water in the handsome ferryman's boat, falls deeply in love with him, and his heart also is touched in spite of his insensibility. He consults the Sibyl, who instructs him in the art of winning a woman's heart, and whose speech anticipates Shakespeare's Rosalind when she teaches Orlando how to court his beloved.

Sapho, languishing with love for Phao, has him brought to her room on the pretext that he possesses a remedy which will cure her. The interview between the lovers is curious, endlessly mannered, yet charming in its concealment of a declaration beneath transparent play on words.

Yet Sapho laments. If Phao loves her, she must lower herself: if he is indifferent to her, she must die. She is saved by Venus, who too is captivated by Phao and who deprives her of feeling. But the goddess fails to win the boatman's love. Her own child Cupid abandons her for Sapho, who inherits her power. And there is nothing left for poor Phao to do but to leave Sicily, taking with him his cult of Sapho (Elizabeth) and his eternal love for her who is impervious to love, who has triumphed over Venus and is the mistress of Cupid.

Endymion (1586) has the merit that Lyly stages in it one of the most poetic of ancient myths which he does not rob of all its original grace. Manifestly this is another eulogy of Elizabeth, to be identified with Cynthia whom Endymion loves respectfully. The allegory is, however, more complicated than those of the earlier plays and more difficult to elucidate. It has been too much a subject of discussion to allow the several suggested interpretations to be given here. Endymion, by the enchantment of Tellus, who is jealous of Cynthia, is overpowered by sleep. One of the most romantic scenes of Elizabethan drama is that in which his friend Eumenides arrives in Thessaly, the land of enchantments, in search of the charm which will awaken him. He reaches the banks of a prophetic spring of which the bed is visible only to faithful lovers, for they alone can read on it the word which will win them their heart's desire. Eumenides, who is the faithful and unfortunate lover of Semele, a lady of Cynthia's

court, hesitates long. Shall he ask for the love of Semele or for the deliverance of Endymion? At last friendship and duty prevail over love, and he learns that a kiss from Cynthia will give back life to Endymion. Awakened after a sleep of forty years, Endymion, thanks to the kiss, recovers his youth and the right to continue his respectful courtship.

When about 1590 Lyly wrote *Midas*, he abandoned flattery for satire. The play is inspired by the disaster which had recently overtaken the Spanish Armada. Midas, having obtained from Bacchus that all he touches shall turn to gold, prefers Pan's song to Apollo's, and by Apollo is afflicted with asses' ears. It is not difficult to read in all this a parable of Philip II, ruined by his very wealth, rashly daring to rival Lesbos, or England, and beaten in his contest with the enemy island. The allusions are very plain. The play is hardly suited to the stage, since it lacks a plot, and its value depends mainly on the skilfulness of the allegory.

In *Gallathea* (1587) Lyly had emancipated himself from the necessity to be either flattering or satirical, and merely amused himself by playing variations on the theme of love. The play has two heroines, both disguised. Each has a father who passes her off as a man to save her from the Minotaur to whom the fairest maiden is offered every five years. So charming are these maidens in their pages' guise that they are loved by all Diana's nymphs. But they love only each other, each believing the other to be a boy. Venus unravels the tangle by changing one of them into a man.

The play has some very pretty motifs and certain elements of poetry. The scene in which Cupid, masquerading as a nymph, uses his disguise to awaken love in all Diana's train, and is discovered by the angry goddess, who obliges him to undo his mischief, is attractive. That in which each of the two fathers assures the other that he has the more beautiful daughter is amusing, as is that in which young Hebe, momentarily threatened by the Minotaur, is saved because her beauty is judged inadequate, and does not know whether to rejoice at her safety or to mourn it.

But Lyly, as often happens to him, stops short in his best scenes. He goes only half-way, makes no more than a sketch. His work lacks movement, and what construction it has is too artificial, frozen by an excess of symmetry.

His last plays are pastorals like his *Gallathea*. *Love's Metamorphosis* shows three nymphs of Ceres, unmoved by the

love of three shepherds and ...
the first into a stone for ...
for her coyness, and the ...
Cupid would restore the ...
proper forms, but at first they refuse this ...
prefer ignorance of
man. They yield
even so they warn
the bird still live in ... hearts.

In *The Woman in the Moone*, his only play in verse, Lyly reaches the point of satirizing woman unreservedly. He repeats the ancient legend in ...
P
sc
b ... from Jupiter, a warlike temper from Mars, kindness from the S ... Venus, falseness ... Then Lyly amus ... by each of these ... in succession. She ends within the sphere of the moon, where she is stationed at her own desire, all women being essentially 'foolish, fickle, franticke, madde.'

While Lyly usually drew on mythology and ancient history for his plays, once, in *Mother Bombie* (1587–9?), he tried his hand at a modern comedy in the Italian manner which has a much complicated ... g passages, it ... It is in his ... e sought.

... else so artistic had yet been produced on the English stage. Lyly's composition has defects: there are weak moments in his plays and ineffective complications, a mingling of the serious and the comic which connects him with the popular drama but proves his inability to blend these opposites in one plot. While, however, there is a general lack of force, depth and true passion in his work, his language is invariably careful; his dialogue is artificial but pointed; retorts depend mainly on play on words, but are lively and well turned and have a courtliness; there is choiceness in his tone and manner ...

... Lyly is a long way below Shakespeare, but none the less he anticipates him, the Shakespeare of *Love's Labour's Lost*,

Midsummer Night's Dream, *Much Ado about Nothing* and especially *As You Like It*. He anticipates him yet more clearly if the charming songs of his comedies be not denied him. They appeared only in a posthumous edition of his works, and recent critics refuse to attribute them to him.

5. *George Peele*.[1]—Like Lyly, the prose-writer, George Peele, the poet (1558-98), began his career as a courtier. Like Lyly, he had a taste for ornament and cared for fine language. Although he acquired a reputation for wildness, became known for an incorrigible Bohemian, his upbringing was good. He went to Oxford and for some time he wrote for the court as a man of letters and refinement and a graceful poet.

The work which was apparently his first may be called a mythological pastoral, *The Arraignment of Paris*, which was played in 1580 before the queen, whom it greets in a concluding apotheosis. Diana revises the judgment of Paris in honour of Elizabeth, to whom she awards the apple. This pastoral has hardly any construction, but is very pleasing. Peele is a less witty and more poetic Lyly. No style was ever more bestrewed with flowers than his. In his play we see Flora causing nature to blossom on the spot where Diana is about to appear and painting with flowers the portrait of Juno in yellow, Pallas in red, and Venus in blue. Peele, who had lately read Spenser's *Shepheard's Calendar*, mingles mythological personages with rude, realistic shepherds. His taste is not infallible: Helen, by whose means Venus seeks to tempt Paris, is a real farm-girl, a fact which does not keep her from singing an Italian song. But these vagaries do not much spoil this fantasy. It is fragrant, lyrical, light, and melodious.

The same love of decoration appears even in those of Peele's plays which were not written directly for the court. His *David and Bethsabe* is curious in this respect. Its subject gives it a place apart from other works as a link with the old religious plays. But it is differentiated from these by the spirit which animates it. Peele ignores the marvellous, knows neither God nor devil. He stages literally a passage from the Bible—2 Samuel xi-xx—on the pattern of the new historical dramas, treating Scripture as Shakespeare afterwards treated the chronicles.

The construction is awkward. Two stories, that of Bethsabe and that of Absalom, are developed side by side but

[1] Complete works ed. by A. H. Bullen, 2 vols. (1888). Study by P. Cheffaud (Paris, 1913).

without connection between them. The drama moves slowly. The play is cold, but the style is very careful. Peele's imagery is inspired by the Psalms and the Song of Songs, but all that in the Bible is great and strange becomes, when he handles it, pretty, decorative, precious, often commonplace, and often unreal. Peele's descriptions are profusely flowery. It is tempting to apply to him the pretty line in his *Arraignment of Paris:*

Ye may ne see for peeping flowers the grass.

For the rest, he is so slavishly faithful to his source that he

to him is uncertain. It is most probable that he wrote *Edward the First*, one of the plays on national history, and *The Old Wives' Tale*, a parody or satire on romantic comedies in which Milton found hints for his *Comus*. The weakness of his dramatic sense is yet more apparent in these plays. He was a poet little fitted to write anything for the stage except masques and lyrical pieces.

Neither Peele not Lyly nor any one else had achieved striking success on the public stage when suddenly, at some

model which had appeared since *Gorboduc*.

If then the artistic drama of the court had its beginning in 1580, it was in the years 1586 and 1587 that the drama of the public stage began its famous career, in which the most diverse genres had part. *Arden of Feversham* remained one of the best examples of the realistic and moral plays given in the city theatres. *The Spanish Tragedie* was for years the most popular of the gloomy, bloodthirsty romantic dramas of these theatres, while *Tamburlaine* was their surpassing heroic play,

edged that English drama had shown even then not only her strength, but also her diversity.

6. *'Arden of Feversham'* (1586).[1]—At this early date it is

[1] Printed by C. F. T. Brooke in *The Shakespeare Apocrypha* (1908).

a surprise to come upon a play which bears all the marks of dramatic maturity. The unknown author of *Arden of Feversham* was no great poet, but he had to an extraordinary extent a sense of the stage, the modern stage. He was in no degree a romantic. He dramatized a real and recent crime chronicled by Holinshed. His play is, in subject and form, a typical citizens' drama, in spite of its fitful use of fine language, its inclusion of some tirades which are characteristic of the Renascence, and its use of blank verse. Its merit lies in its psychological truth and its character-drawing.

Alice, wife of the wealthy gentleman Arden of Feversham, has become the mistress of Mosbie, a countryman of low birth and coarse nature, who inexplicably fascinates her. The two of them plot to murder her husband, she that she may belong only to Mosbie, he out of avarice. After several failures they contrive the murder successfully, but their crime is immediately discovered, and they and their accomplices are duly executed.

The play is fundamentally moral. It really makes adultery and murder odious, embellishing neither life nor vice. But it reaches this effect not by sermonizing, but by insight into the souls of the guilty, the tortures they undergo, and their meanness.

The husband is indeed drawn with a rather hesitating hand: he vacillates between jealousy and credulity, passes from just anger at the shamelessness of the lovers to a blind confidence inspired by his wife's blandishments. He seems to be aware of Mosbie's treachery and yet he takes him back into favour and declares him innocent. He speaks like an honourable man, and yet there is an episode in which, in order to round off his estate, he gets possession of a poor man's land. This indecision weakens the emotional effect in that it withdraws some sympathy from the vicitm, but it is also a signal proof of the realism of this playwright, who refused to create a hero, to make a rude contrast between vice and virtue.

In Mosbie's vileness there is no contradiction. He has not passion for an excuse. Throughout his love-making with Alice he slyly nurses a grudge against her, never loses his class-hatred, which she inflames by rash words when she is suffering twinges of remorse.

Alice is a prey to an irresistible passion which, in lucid moments, she vaguely suspects to be the effect of witchcraft, She is the soul of the play: her will leads to action, decides on

the murder and plans it, because she wishes to belong unshared to Mosbie. But no sooner is the crime accomplished than the spell is broken. Alice is horrified by her own deed and dies repentant.

There are whole scenes between the two lovers which grip us by their truth and their forcible portrayal of the soul. In Act III, scene v, Mosbie is shown uneasy about the consequences of the contemplated crime. He has been drinking to dull his faculties, but his anxiety persists. He realizes that he is much less happy than he used to be, yet knows that the affair is in train and he cannot draw back, and so looks [illegible]

giglote' he might have married an honest maid 'whose dowry would have weyed down all thy wealth.' It is he who has been bewitched, but he has done with her. He sees her as she is, without beauty; he is maddened by the thought that he ever thought her fair. And thereupon Alice abuses herself, supplicates him, declares herself ready to burn her prayer-book, appeals to his love. Mortified and filled with mean resentment, he at first answers her ironically, thoughts of money mingling with all his thoughts of love:

> O no, I am a base artificer,
> My winges are feathered for a lowly flight.
> Mosby? fy! no, not for a thousand pound.
> Make love to you? why, 'tis unpardonable;
> We beggars must not breathe where gentiles are.

Yet he gives in because it is in his interest to do so. [illegible]

in a friend's house in London, and his servant Michael is to open the door to two murderers while his master is asleep.

and he cares nothing for the unities. He takes from the Latin poet only what he thinks an English audience will assimilate, and leaves the loose, facile construction of the national drama intact. He owes to Seneca's *Thyestes* his theme of vengeance, one capable of producing the most pathetic and most fearful effects. He learns from him to envelop his whole work with an atmosphere of gloom, and adds the use of the most powerful stage expedients known to his own experience.

Young Horatio, son of the marshal Hieronimo and valiant as the Cid, is treacherously slain by Prince Balthazar and the perfidious Lorenzo at the very moment of exchanging love-vows with Bel-Imperia, daughter of the Duke of Castile. Bel-Imperia and Hieronimo swear to discover the murderers and avenge the deed. When the old father, who feigns madness in order to reach his ends and is indeed half-mad [illegible] con-
Bel-
This
kills
himself or is killed.

Another story of revenge is a frame for this one. Before the action of the play begins, Don Andrea, Bel-Imperia's first lover, has been treacherously slain in the war with Portugal. His ghost opens the play, calling for vengeance on Prince Balthazar, who has put him to death.

A synopsis can give, however, only a poor idea of the horrors of this melodrama and the skill which made it a triumph. The fearfulness of crime is introduced into ardent, passionate scenes, making a contrast as violent as that between light and darkness. Horatio and Bel-Imperia are suddenl
tell her
she giv
assignation in the gardens of old Hieronimo, and there is a scene passionate as that between Hernani and Doña Sol, which is interrupted by the arrival of masked assassins who stab Horatio and hang his body in an arbour.

The sequel is even more horrible. Old Hieronimo, who has been awakened by Bel-Imperia's cries, comes through the shadows clad only in his shirt. He gropes his way, stumbles upon the corpse, and at this moment is joined by his wife, old Isabella. They mingle their tears and their vows for revenge.

Hieronimo's final oath is in thirteen Latin hexameters, and it must have sounded like an incantation and have been as terrifying as it was incomprehensible.

Old Hieronimo's madness, whether true or feigned, overtakes him in strange accesses. He goes to demand justice of the king, and before all the court plunges his poniard in the ground. Since he is a judge, citizens petition him for justice, among them an old man who desires that his son's murder may be avenged. The judge is thereupon beside himself, draws from his breast a napkin stained with Horatio's blood, tears the plaintiff's petitions to pieces, and finally rushes from the room, crying 'Run after, catch me, if you can.' Almost at once he returns and mistakes the old father for his Horatio. Persuaded from this error, he believes the old man is a Fury exciting him to avenge, then recognizes the old father's true identity and goes out with him, arm in arm. Certainly no one could be madder.

In the last scene, in which every one is killed, Hieronimo confesses to the king what he has done. When the king threatens him with extreme torture, he bites out his tongue in order not to speak again. Then he beckons for a knife with which to mend his pen, and therewith adds to the bloodshed by stabbing the father of one of his son's murderers and killing himself. Don Andrea's ghost, which appears several times over to demand revenge, may well declare itself satisfied.

It was difficult to go much farther in melodrama. This one was so good that, in spite of all ironies and parodies, there was still a demand for it fifteen years after its first performance. Ben Jonson, the classicist, made additions to it, possibly those which have come down to us and which are certainly remarkable. They consist of new touches added to Hieronimo's madness and give the play the benefit of the improvement in dramatic psychology that had been made in the interval.

The play in its original form is emphatic, declamatory, and often ridiculous, yet such as to grip a simple public. The motives for action are not made clear; the characters are alive yet hardly have character. It is the element of the pathetic which veils all defects. Of all the parts in Renascence drama, that of Hieronimo was the most grateful to actors and the most popular with the public. Moreover, the play supplies the poetry of place and scenery. It respects neither the unity of place nor that of time, yet preserves, on the whole, unity of

action, and it also has unity of motive, for it all centres round revenge.

This excellent and most popular motive recurs in several of the great plays: *The Spanish Tragedie* foreshadows *Hamlet*. If the principal object of literary history were to determine starting-points, more space would be given to Kyd's play than to any of the great Shakespearian tragedies. Critics admit to-day that Kyd, whose other work is less interesting and is not certainly his, may have written an early and lost version of *Hamlet*. Such a play unquestionably existed in 1589, and it is likely that its author was the creator of old Hieronimo.

8. *Marlowe*.[1]—*Tamburlaine*, in its two parts, of which the first appeared in 1587 and the second in 1588, astonished the public for quite other reasons than *The Spanish Tragedie*. Its author was Christopher Marlowe (1564–93), a young man of twenty-three, who had just left Cambridge. He was entirely without experience of the stage, but he compensated for this lack by the extraordinary spirit of defiance and revolt which animated his dramatic work. Novel though *Arden of Feversham* and *The Spanish Tragedie* were, they were plays which bore the imprint of the traditional morality. From beginning to end they denounced and condemned crime; their murders cried out for vengeance. But the new playwright dared to claim admiration for the most bloodthirsty of men, to make of him a sort of demigod.

Nothing is more characteristic of Marlowe than his choice of his first hero. He had read a translation of Tamerlane's life by the Spaniard Pedro Mexia and another life of him by Perondinus of Florence. His imagination was inflamed by the story of the career of this unmatched adventurer who from a mere shepherd became the most powerful man in all the world. There was no need to invent: to follow history, or legend in the guise of authentic history, was enough. What were Alexander and Caesar beside this fourteenth-century Tartar,

[1] His collected works have been edited by A. H. Bullen in *The English Dramatists*, 3 vols. (1884–5), by C. F. Tucker Brooke (Oxford, 1910), and by R. H. Case (general editor, Arden Edition), 6 vols. (1930–1). Selected plays edited by Havelock Ellis in the Mermaid Series (1887).

Annotated editions: *Doctor Faustus*, ed. Ward, and *Edward II*, ed. Tancock (Clarendon Press).

Critical studies: C. P. Baker, *Dramatic Technique in Marlowe* (1913); U. M. Ellis-Fermor, *Christopher Marlowe* (1927); F. S. Boas, *Marlowe and his Circle* (1929, 2nd edition, 1931); *idem*, *Christopher Marlowe, a Biographical and Critical Study* (Oxford, 1940).

the conqueror of Persia and Muscovy who laid Hindustan and Syria waste, vanquished the Ottomans, and died at last as he was flinging himself upon China at the head of two hundred thousand warriors? What cruelty did not seem mildness beside his, who strangled a hundred thousand captives before the walls of Delhi, and set up before Baghdad an obelisk built of ninety thousand severed heads? What symbol could strike more terror than the white tents and banners which stood, in sign of friendship, before a town on the first day of one of Tamerlane's sieges, the red tents and red flags which were there on the second day, in sign of pillage, and the banners and tents, all black, which beset it on the third day, in sign of extermination?

All this was so grandiose that Marlowe was dazzled. The man capable of so prodigious a destiny, of such unbridled contempt for human life, seemed to him a superior being, a superman to whom the petty rules of morality did not apply. His Tamburlaine massacres wholesale, women and children as well as men, laughs at the blood he sheds, imprisons the vanquished Emperor Bajazet in a cage, has his chariot drawn by kings whom he insults, burns a town in honour of the funeral of his wife, Zenocrate, and all the while remains entirely admirable, outside and above human judgment. He is the despiser of men and gods. Marlowe endows him with the boundless arrogance of an emancipated virtuoso and philosopher of the Renascence. Tamburlaine is the great victor, the conqueror of the world. Therefore he is in the right.

Marlowe transfigures him, not by omitting or weakening any of his atrocities, but by exalting them. He sees in him the triumph of the will to power and thinks that nothing could be finer. To glorify his Tamburlaine he goes to the romances of chivalry in search of heroes moved by an unbridled appetite for glory, and there finds the poetry a mere exterminator would lack. Like those extravagant knights, Tamburlaine is capable of extraordinary love. He lays the earth at the feet of his Zenocrate and when death takes her from him, he threatens heaven with his rage.

This play, which is simply Tamburlaine's life divided into scenes, expresses the strange ardours of a young scholar who had cut himself irrevocably adrift from all restraint. A libertine in both senses of the word, Marlowe prided himself on his paganism, his rebellion, not against the dogma of the Trinity only, but against the very spirit of Christianity. His

ideal was the man freed from all morality who seeks the maximum of strength and enjoyment by way of impiety, sensuality, and crime. What he could not declare to the public directly, he makes his Tamburlaine proclaim upon the stage. It was to the quest of the impossible that he himself aspired, and Tamburlaine is vowed to it at his first meeting with Zenocrate. She has come to him, all dishevelled and disconsolate, to ask him to pardon her father, the Sultan of Egypt. At this moment the man who had, an instant before, slaughtered the suppliant virgins of Damascus and had their corpses hoisted on pikes, utters the most lyrical of appeals to absolute beauty, a cry of grief because he knows and declares that what he calls upon is beyond his reach.

The like exaltation had already been felt by Tamburlaine at the thought of being king. On the precedent of Jupiter, who ousted his father Saturn from the throne in order to reign himself, Tamburlaine regards ambition as the spontaneous act of human nature:

> Still climbing after knowledge infinite,
> And always moving as the restless spheres.

The same wild rapture is sustained through ten acts, for two dramas are consecrated to this one hero Tamburlaine,

laine, who tenders him a mouthful or two on the point of his sword; Bajazet, at the end of his endurance, braining himself against the iron bars which imprison him; his wife,

to whom he cries:

> Holla, ye pamper'd jades of Asia!
> What, can ye draw but twenty miles a day?

It was never necessary to parody *Tamburlaine*, to mention it was enough. On the whole, its spectacular extravagances

the pope and the cardinals, and to make poor wretches the butt of his magic. Marlowe takes little interest in these distractions, which he barely outlines. But when Faustus evokes the spirits of the past and obtains a vision of the Greek Helen, the poet, imagining her supreme beauty, is rapt to incomparable lyricism.

Retribution follows: Faustus has to keep his bargain with Lucifer, and tremblingly awaits death and hell. Marlowe, the atheist, alone in a Christian world, must also, at times, have felt to the full the horror of his denials and his blasphemies. He was too near faith to be indifferent. The very vehemence of his professions of impiety was a sign that his emancipation was incomplete. He shook his fist at heaven and feared at the same moment that heaven might fall and crush him. The last scenes of *Faustus* are among the most pathetic and most grandiose in Renascence drama. They stand by themselves, distinct from all the rest of the drama. They are unsurpassable, even by Shakespeare. Marlowe, incapable of a complete masterpiece, yet had genius to reach, here and there, the sublime beauty which has no degrees. When Goethe took the same legend for the basis of one of the chief accomplishments of modern poetry, he could not eclipse the poignant greatness of his forerunner's scenes. He, who did not know how the impious tremble, could not recapture that anguish of horror.

Marlowe never again found a plot which gave him so much scope, but even in *The Jew of Malta* (1589) he sometimes reveals his lyrical power. He was doubtless led to write this melodrama by the success of *The Spanish Tragedie* and other tragedies of atrocious vengeance. His Jew, Barabas, is unjustly deprived of his goods by Christians, and by an extraordinary series of crimes avenges himself on them, and [illegible] stand on [illegible] Malta to [illegible] falls into [illegible] schemed [illegible]

There is only one other character who counts in this play, and he is yet more terrible, the Moorish slave Ithamore who is Barabas's tool and an incarnation of the lust of extreme cruelty.

This melodrama opens grandly, and before the Jew becomes a criminal maniac he has, like Tamburlaine, dignity and greatness. Enormously rich, we see him first in his counting-house, with heaps of gold before him, a poet intoxicated by the immensity of his own wealth and the immense power which is its consequence. As he enumerates the countries whence his treasures come, his exaltation has a mystical greatness. Something of this remains to him when he hears the governor's order that half his estate and that of the other Jews shall be confiscated to pay the tribute to the Turks, and when only he of all his co-religionists keeps his pride, remaining indignant and inflexible. It has often been said that Shakespeare dared to defy contemporary prejudice by attracting sympathy intermittently to Shylock. Yet Shakespeare's Shylock is as avaricious as he is cruel, and ridiculous through his avarice. The only true rehabilitation of the Jew is that which Marlowe attempted in his first act, where the haughty, intrepid Barabas, facing the hypocritical governor, is really a splendid figure. That he [illegible] as a frenzied wretch is of little conseque[illegible] poet identified himself with the Jew, who may even, by the very enormity of his later crimes, have retained the strange sympathy of his creator.

Besides an unfinished play, *The Massacre at Paris*, on the massacre of St. Bartholomew, a subject which gave Marlowe his fill of horrors and attracted him by the boundless ambition of the Duke of Guise whom he made his hero, he wrote a *Dido*, which was finished by Nashe and in which he dramatized the fourth book of the *Aeneid*. This play is less sombre in colour than his earlier work, but is marred in places by the worst lapses of taste. Marlowe was also able, before he died at the age of twenty-nine, to write the best of the tragedies on national history which preceded Shakespeare's, his *Edward the Second*, first acted in 1592.

Whether because Marlowe's genius had developed, or because the exigencies of historical drama obliged him to self-effacement, this play has qualities [illegible] and are found in none of its predec[illegible]tion is under a new restraint. The tirades are shorter and the dialogue is better distributed in speeches. The blank verse is less strained and more pliable, nearer to the tones of the human voice. Progress in character-study is also evinced, over a numerous and diversified cast.

The subject is the veracious history of a king who is dominated by his favourites, first Gaveston and then young Mortimer.

Isabella, w

cast into p

accomplices, who are in their turn executed by their victim's son.

Edward II stands for sentimental weakness, the royal baseness which cowardice can make bloodthirsty. In Mortimer, with his unbridled ambition, Marlowe returned to one of his

pity.

Edward the Second is better constructed than Marlowe's other plays, free from his habitual extravagance, less inhuman and less removed from the normal drama of the time But it shows the author's dramatic weakness the more clearly because of its very merits. This tragedy has not the lucidity necessary to character-drawing, to the weaving of a plot, and to the distribution of sympathy. It also lacks variety and dramatic progression. Of the plays devoted to national history, it was, until Shakespeare, the most artistic, but a long distance separates it from the least of Shakespeare's historical dramas. The spirit of patriotism necessary to a work of the kind does not breathe in it, possibly because Marlowe, a rebel against the religion and morality of his

any sense of the comic or sense of humour or aptitude to draw a woman, Marlowe yet possessed a supreme quality which enabled him at once to lift drama into the sphere of high literature. He was a great poet, a lyrical, personal, violently egoistical poet, who carried with him his own unique conception of man and life. In spite of his atheism, he foreshadowed Milton from afar; a little of him was in the Byron who wrote *Cain*, a little in Shelley. His exclusiveness produced intensity, and the English stage was in great need of intensity. Grace, wit, and fancy had been scattered on it, mingled indeed with faults of every kind, but never hitherto had it known this dash, this vehemence, animating a whole play, this rapid march, as to victory, by which drama inspires the conviction that thus to move is to be alive.

It is, after all, a mistake to suppose that every work written for the stage must have specially dramatic qualities. To give an audience an impression of greatness, to cause them to tremble with enthusiasm and feel the rush towards an end—any end: this does as well. The fact is proved by Marlowe's work as by part of Corneille's. His immediate success and his powerful influence are unquestionable. Even when his plays had come to seem extravagant they remained popular. They first made the English public feel the pride of strength, and persuaded or deluded English drama into the belief that it equalled the sublimity of the ancients. As did the *Cid*, Marlowe's plays, for all their lack of patriotism, made hearts swell with a new national pride. His characters, out of scale and unnatural as they are, can dispense with probability because they have the breath of life. Their passionate declaiming co-operated with the triumph over the Armada, one year after Marlowe's first play, and the pride in distant conquests, to make English hearts drunk and giddy with triumphant strength. Together with the discoveries of the great seafarers, these figures on the stage enlarged, in men's minds, the bounds of the possible. These plays were a paean to the infinity of military power, of knowledge, and of wealth. The subjects Marlowe borrowed, the heroes he moulded, were no more than his mouthpieces, voicing his exorbitant dreams. Like him they sought the infinite and like him were never sated.

9. *Robert Greene.*[1]—The success of *The Spanish Tragedie* and

[1] See *supra*, p. 338, n. Also: Greene, *Plays and Poems*, ed. J. Churton Collins, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1905); *Plays*, ed. C. H. Dickinson (Mermaid Series,

of *Tamburlaine*
by surprise.
the young Eng
from the age
from the universities who did the actors the great honour of working for them. Lyly and Peele, who looked especially to the court, were somewhat loosely attached to this group. Thomas Lodge (1558?–1625) was rather connected with the

> To write no more of that whence shame doth grow,
> [Nor] tie my pen to pennie-knaves delight.

But Greene presisted and was obliged to conform to the altered taste. His *Alphonsus* and his *Orlando Furioso* are extravagant and declamatory enough to recall *Tamburlaine*, but bear no marks of genius. It is possible to doubt whether *Alphonsus* is an imitation of Marlowe's famous play or a parody on it.

Greene's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is another *Faustus*, called into being by the success of that play. Greene's conformity to the changed demand is, however, only apparent. His personal vein subsists, with its charm, and forms an essential contribution to the preparation for Shakespeare's work.

This element, which is Greene's own, is manifest in two plays which, among those attributed to him, were certainly written by him and which seem to have been his last works for the stage, *Friar Bacon* and *James the Fourth*.

The title of *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* is misleading, for it is applicable only to the secondary part of the play, in which

---

1909); *James IV*, printed in Manly's *Specimens*. Lodge, *Complete Works* (except translations), ed. Gosse, 4 vols. (Glasgow, 1878–82); *The Wounds of Civil Warr* in Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, vol. vii; also ed. by J. D. Wilson (Malone Society Reprints).

Another charming scene is that in which Ida is tempted by a certain Ateukin, the tool of James IV. *He finds her sitting with her mother in the porch of their castle, both women* busy with needlework. The conversation of the mother and daughter, before he arrives, is full of the honesty and simple happiness of pious, unambitious persons. Ida answers Ateukin's offers in words both candid and noble. Virtuous as she is, his revelation of vice astonishes her:

> O, how he talks, as if he should not die!

In Dorothea, Griselda is once more recalled, but she is also [illegible] heroines—Julia, Viola, Imogen [illegible] and has signed her death- [illegible] on her father, the king of [illegible]

> As if they kill not me, who with him fight!
> *As if his breast be touched, I am not wounded!*
> As if he [illegible]
> We are on[illegible]
> One soul, [illegible]
> What, the [illegible]

This pathetic scene ends in charming fancifulness, Dorothea, *disguised as a man, fleeing with her dwarf Nano, and smiling* through her tears at her own strange figure. She reaches a wood, tired out, and is comforted by Nano, who is as faithful but not as sarcastic as Lear's fool. We think of Rosalind arriving with the fool Touchstone in the Forest of Arden.

Greene, by his taste for the romantic and his moments of tenderness, foreshadows Shakespeare, as does Lyly by his wit, the author of *Arden of Feversham* by his psychological sense, Kyd by his tragic [illegible] Marlowe by his lyrical eloquence. Those [illegible] in one man and one work, [illegible] together and to enhance them.

significant. Nashe and his friends, the company of young humanists known as the University Wits, had hardly recovered from Marlowe's sudden triumph, when they were faced with another and more dangerous rival who sprang from a different world. Marlowe, Master of Arts of Cambridge, was after all one of themselves, and when once they had exclaimed against his arrogance, it did not take them long to follow in his footsteps. He was a new and a brilliant recruit for their group. But danger now threatened them from the world of the actors, from the ignoramuses whom they were wont to regard as barely able to declaim the fine passages written for them by men of letters. A well-known actors' company, the Lord Chamberlain's, were snapping their fingers at the manuscripts of the university men, the accredited producers of fine literature. An actor was taking it upon himself to write, was reshaping, clipping, adding to his
c
c
s
i
crowe beautified with our feathers that with his

> Tyger's heart wrapt in a player's hide

is the
is in

as their souls.

The man who was thus denounced was William Shakespeare,

plays v
tists of
or six
of his birth, Stratford-on-Avon, as much by poverty as by a passion for adventure and for the stage. It was his intention to supply the needs of his father, whose business was not thriving, of the wife he had rashly married when he was only eighteen, and of his three children. His education had been haphazard, as much a matter of miscellaneous, ardent reading

as the result of his attendance at Stratford grammar-school, and he might well seem ignorant to Masters and Bachelors of Arts of the two universities. He had nothing behind him except his natural genius and his daily experience of the stage. He had no theory of literature, only the desire to interest the public, and a talent so flexible that it immediately adapted itself to every *genre* and imitated every note on which a poet had ever played.

There is some doubt about his first plays, for they were anonymous and for the most part rearrangements. The young actor realized that, in these years near the Armada, patriotism was the link which most strongly united the very mixed audiences in the playhouses. He therefore turned to the chronicles, and produced the scenes from national history which then were so popular. He retouched scenes from the reign of Henry VI which showed, in turn, the exploits of Talbot, the astonishing career of Joan of Arc, the 'witch,' and the English disasters caused by the civil war. Nothing hitherto performed had had so much movement or diversity or shown so much understanding of the stage as this crowded trilogy of plays, entirely archaic in structure and attractive mainly because of the multiplicity of its incidents.

The triumph of Kyd and Marlowe had, however, shown the playwright that the applause of audiences could be won in other ways. The innovations attracted him by their success and by the conspicuous merits which veiled their conspicuous defects. He wrote, or more probably retouched, *Titus Andronicus*, a tragedy of atrocious vengeance which reveals an imagination even more fertile of horrors than those which conceived *The Spanish Tragedie* and *The Jew of Malta*. But he knew himself able to evoke laughter as well as tears and shudders. This young man had a very keen sense of the comic and an inexhaustible, almost excessive, flow of words. He was ambitious not only of a popular success, but also of the approval of the wits, even the court wits. Lyly's witty dialogue inspired him, and with a vigour unknown to Lyly he wrote *Love's Labour's Lost*, a fantasy of which the subject and the style appealed to the most cultured section of the public. At much the same time, he supplied less fastidious appetites with a farce which was a free adaptation of the *Menaechmi* of Plautus, and, that laughter might be the louder, he added to its plot, inventing two servants exactly like each other to balance the close resemblance between their masters. In this

play he indulged in Rabelaisian mock-lyricism, the like of

own sphere, may also have been acted by this time, a fact which would explain the chagrin of that painter of the gentle love of women, to whom it must have been bitter to witness the advent of Silvia and Julia.

The playwright who had been neither to Oxford nor to

prosperous actor. We have said that, in spite of Puritan disapproval, actors in this period enjoyed much prestige with the most various classes of society and had access to every world, from the lowest to the highest. Rather than be surprised that Shakespeare, like Molière, was an actor and yet wrote plays which were masterpieces, we might well ask if it

¹ The chief of the theories of this kind advanced are: (a) The Baconian

his cruelty and his crimes The tragedy of *Richard II*,

l follows his own genius for character-drawing. In *King* *'in* no reminiscence of Marlowe remains save the eloquence the tirades and the sonorous roll of the verse In the

comic and the tragic, his association of Falstaff with the ince of Wales who became the hero of Agincourt—show at his genius had reached complete independence. Here, lf.

the passionate tragedy splendour, the poetry, d the pathos were not even faintly foreshadowed by any lier work.

Every memory of Lyly's mythological imagination and tty dialogue and of Greene's sustained and tender grace before the exquisite fairy-, and before that marvel-mpounded of feeling and ighter, mocking and grave at once, *The Merchant of Venice*, *uch Ado about Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*. ie poet's contemporaries seem to have felt that these plays re more clearly marked by his genius than his other work, they gave rise to the epithets frequently connected with s' name, 'sweet,' 'witty,' 'gentle.' The public might be ken in by the playwrights who emulated his tragedies, but ese were enchanted regions in which he reigned alone over unshared kingdom.

He did not, however, imprison himself in them He main s. mic Del ccess of the new genre provoked Shakespeare to emulation. is, rather than mere chance, must have been the origin of *ie Merry Wives of Windsor.*

It was at about this time that the critics' discussion of amatic laws, hitherto confined to the narrow world of eorists, began also to interest authors and the literate

section of the public. After the publication of Sidney's *Defence of Poesie*, in 1595, men were concerned about the unities, dramatic decorum, and probability. Ben Jonson brought the question right on to the stage, the stage of the Globe Theatre where Shakespeare acted, and Shakespeare had too open a mind not to be interested in it. In the several prologues of *Henry V*, he shows himself cognizant of it. But he dismissed it with a smile, trusting to the docility of his audiences and to the facile imaginative power which kept them from quarrelling with their enjoyment. From this time, however, he was raising up for himself an opposition from the humanists which was to injure his prestige. Critics came to divide playwrights into two classes: those who wrote free drama and the classicists, the former headed by Shakespeare and the latter by Jonson. That amusing university comedy, *The Returne from Parnassus*, played in 1601, marks the rise of this distinction which henceforth, in the opinion of some of Shakespeare's contemporaries, modified his glory.

3. *His Career from 1601 to 1608.*—About the year 1601 Shakespeare's dramatic career underwent a singular revolution. Hitherto there had been about his plays an air of youth and cheerfulness. Even *Romeo and Juliet* begins in a lively, even a rapturous, mood, and is rather a play which darkens to tragedy than a tragedy of unrelieved gloom. One of the most comic and one of the most fanciful of Shakespearean characters, Juliet's nurse and Mercutio, hold their own for a long time before the inroads of passion and the obsession of catastrophe. Not only, however, does 1601 mark the beginning of the series of great and cruel tragedies and no less tragic dramas of Roman history, but after this date such comedies as the poet wrote had lost all their gaiety. Characters intended to be diverting, like Parolles in *All's Well that Ends Well*, miss their effect. *Measure for Measure* hovers for three acts on the brink of tragedy, and escapes it finally only by an effort so violent as to snap one of the poet's most powerful works in two. Where, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, laughter persists, it is bitter, cynical, and sarcastic, never light-hearted.

The question of the reason for the change arises. Did it lie in Shakespeare's own feelings or outside him? There is no doubt that as an actor-author he was increasingly prosperous. The passing danger of the rivalry of the boy-actors cannot thus have disturbed him, any more than certain sarcasms uttered by the humanists. He suffered, however,

some personal sorrows. He lost his father in 1601. Above all, the sonnets prove that he endured a tragedy of the heart, was betrayed by a friend and a mistress and bitterly dis-

In all probability,

As Southampton's

, and felt very deeply the failure of the Essex conspiracy, the execution of the favourite, and the imprisonment of his accomplice, Southampton. The choice in this very year of the subject of *Julius Caesar*, and the glorification, at Caesar's expense, of Brutus, the conspirator, can best be explained by political events and by the poet's increasing pessimism.

Yet since this was a playwright compelled to provide the public with the feast they craved, we may also ask to what

human and happier work, he had done more than any one [illegible]

the theme of old Hieronimo's madness and are possibly from the pen of Ben Jonson. In 1602 Henry Chettle produced *The* [illegible]

and in one place, within the bounds of an island. Thus to the last Shakespeare demonstrated his only conviction: that all dramatic systems are good, but not one of them indispensable.

It has been ascertained that almost all those of his plays which are accepted as his supreme masterpieces were produced after 1601. Yet, owing to the strictures of the humanists, he seems in this second part of his career to have lost the unique position which was his at the end of the sixteenth century. In [illegible] much, names him together with Dekker and Heywood, as ranking a little below Chapman and Jonson, those learned authors, and Fletcher and Beaumont, those well-born young playwrights. He places him on a level with two popular improvisers. The quality he praises in him is his 'right happy and copious industry.' We seem to hear the faint echo of animated, noisy arguments in the literary taverns or even on the stage, arguments which did not diminish Shakespeare's success with the public, but which modified his reputation among certain wits and pedants, those who were beginning to pose as dramatic critics.

After his retirement and death, Shakespeare still had fervent [illegible] did they discern his true stature.

5. *In what does Shakespeare's Superiority over his Contemporaries consist? The Variety of his Gifts.*—Wherein does Shakespeare's superiority, universally recognized to-day, lie? *To us it shines with a blinding light, yet it did not dazzle those* round about him, whence it follows that in some way it was

difficult to apprehend. There is indeed hardly a glory of Shakespeare's drama which might not be matched by a fragment or an aspect of some other play of the period. He did not—how could he?—surpass the pathos and poetic sublimity of the last scenes of Marlowe's *Faust*. He created no atmosphere of grief and horror more agonizing than that which envelops Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. Not one of his plays is more solidly constructed than Jonson's *Volpone*, *Epicoene*, and *Alchemist*. None of his comedies is more skilfully staged than Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, none of his tragedies than their *Maid's Tragedy*. Fletcher's and Dekker's songs yield nothing to his in lyrical beauty. He has created no character more singularly original than Dekker's old Friscobaldo, and he never gives the illusion of reality more powerfully than Middleton and Rowley in their De Flores. The poignant humanity of Heywood in *A Woman Killed with Kindness* equals his when his painting is most moving. There is in Dekker's *Shoemakers Holiday* a merry swing not bettered in Shakespeare's most exhilarating comedy. Every element in Shakespeare's drama might thus, in isolation, be matched by the best of the contemporary writers for the stage at their best. What, then, is distinctive in Shakespeare?

First, his combination of all the gifts which were scattered or isolated in the work of others, the multifariousness of his curiosity, and the extreme diversity of his talents. From the very outset of his career this is apparent. He did not, like most of his fellow-dramatists, continue unswervingly in the path in which he made his first steps, acquiring, like Lyly, Kyd, and Marlowe, a distinct manner which both marked and bounded his personality. His flexibility was marvellous. He adapted himself to the most diverse material, and seemed to use it all with equal ardour and joy. Besides the narrative poems like *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, into which he poured all his love for lyrical beauty and command of rhymes, his first essays in drama are so astonishingly various that no one theory fits them and each of them ought to be studied separately. They correspond to and overflow every dramatic classification hitherto known—national history, tragedy, comedy, romantic and fairy plays. But these categories do not suffice to show their variety. The word comedy includes works of Shakespeare's as distinct as *Love's Labour's Lost*, that fantasy made up of sparkling dialogue

and volleys of word-play, and *The Comedy of Errors*, a farce with a much involved plot modelled on Plautus. No two of the dramas of English history have the same shape or a like movement. *Henry VI*, little removed from the mysteries, is [illegible], hardly [illegible] figure, [illegible] ut they include very searching character-drawing and are persistently dominated by one personage. This trilogy is in fact massed very freely about the wild young heir to the crown, constantly in the company of the jovial drunkard Falstaff, till he is transformed into a triumphant king. The interest of *Richard III* is concentrated in the monstrous Gloucester, who through fraud and murder hews himself a way to the throne, and [illegible]

as though he had sworn in his youth to experiment in constructions of the most varied kinds and in the most highly contrasted moods. He shows equal aptitude for the tragic and the comic, the sentimental and the burlesque, lyrical fantasy and character-study, portraits of women and of men. To the end of his career these alternatives recur. In the two years, 1601 and 1602, he produced the light-hearted comedy, *Twelfth Night*, with its mingling of farce and romance, *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, and *All's Well that Ends Well*. About 1608 came, in quick succession, *Coriolanus*, *Timon*, and *Pericles*. His greatest triumphs could not induce him to sustain an attitude, and although a persistent pessimism consecutively inspired, from 1604 to 1606, the great sorrowful tragedies, *Othello*, *Lear*, and *Macbeth*, these were differentiated by such astonishing variety of kind, presentment, and dramatic movement, that the impossibility of finding one formula to fit them all is quickly apparent.

This diversity exists everywhere in Shakespearian drama. It is shown both in the contrast afforded by plays produced

at the same time, and in that evolution which colours the whole series of the plays with the hues of the succeeding seasons—the fresh green of spring, the darkness of summer thunderstorms, and the melancholy splendour of autumn.

6. *Creative Force. His Characters.*—Besides his variety, the poet's capital gift was certainly that he could endow historical and imaginary beings with life, not intermittently and by flashes, like most of his contemporaries, but constantly, so that however they are modified during a play they do not lose their identity. This power was abnormally developed in him, but he wielded it easily, naturally, spontaneously, without ever giving an impression of effort. From the beginning there is life everywhere, but as he advanced towards maturity his characters came to be more boldly outlined and more complex. This is first manifest in Biron in *Love's Labour's Lost*, in the antithesis presented by Proteus and Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and by Richard II and Richard III in the plays called after them, and in the contrast in *Richard II* between the too imaginative king and the astute Bolingbroke. The first important comic figure is undoubtedly Bottom in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, but the clown Launce in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and the Dromios in *The Comedy of Errors* had previously made good their claim to droll originality. From 1593 onwards, very few characters of any importance in any one of the plays failed to receive from their creator the vital spark and the distinctive mark of their individuality; each one of them deserves to be named. They differ in their sex, age, state of life, virtues and vices, but all of them are alike in being alive. Since we cannot go through all the list, let us think only of those who in a single tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*, receive their rich share of this vital gift: the lovers no doubt have most of it, but it is also meted out to old Capulet, Tybalt the bully, the cynical Mercutio, the nurse, and Friar Laurence. Their parts may be short, they may have to speak only some twenty lines of verse, but these are enough to let the poet make them unforgettable. Multiply them by thirty-six, the number of his plays, and you have a throng than which none more alive ever issued from a human imagination. A whole world persuades audiences, or even mere readers, of its presence, with a force of realism to which very few of the real beings among whom playgoers spend their lives attain. It is principally in this respect that Shakespeare surpasses his rivals and is Shakespeare. His

contemporaries have written scattered scenes, as animated, as tragic, comic, or poetic as his, but when the total number of the persons to whom they have ensured immortality is counted, it is questionable whether all of these, collected from all their plays, would counterbalance those in a single great Shakespearian play.

It is indeed not enough to say that Shakespeare's supreme gift to his puppets, that which places him far above his contemporaries, is life and animation. Animation at least is not lacking to the creations of the others, some of whom are prodigal of it. [illegible] that their chara[illegible] lowe, nor Jons[illegible] produce surprise; in their feelings we do not recognize our own; their extravagance or their inexplicably sudden changes of front are disconcerting. Shakespeare's characters, whether good or bad, whether moving among the realities of history or among the most romantic happenings, have an unfailing humanity which makes them plausible and keeps them within the orbit of our sympathy.

7. *The Epical Basis of Shakespeare's Drama.*—A profound difference between Shakespeare's work and that of his contemporaries consists in the greater truth, the more serious and substantial character, which fundamentally belongs to his plays in the mass. Their matter, and theirs alone, is epical as much as romantic. [illegible] to the epical, and wrought it [illegible] on a great scale. His six d[illegible] three Roman tragedies, together with *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *Macbeth* [illegible] spearian drama. They prove the poet to have been long in contact with what were, or what he believed to be, the realities of the past. His effort to evoke and revive the past left him with a taste for truth apparent in his treatment of subjects which are hardly historical but are borrowed from the *novellieri*, for instance the themes of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Othello*

uld be possible to find yet other reminiscences of the
100d which give substance to fiction even in his fantastic
y worlds, right in the heart of his romantic plays. Other
rights often made history unreal, but Shakespeare
warrant the truth even of romance.

is the plays devoted to national history which most
y connect his work with the old religious drama, of which
riginal object was not mere pleasure but instruction
dification.

hing is more honourable to Elizabethan audiences than
they sought their amusement in the mere spectacle of
national events; nothing better attests the poet's great-
than his self-effacement in his work and his neglect
the pettiness of the dramatic codes and the recipes for
icing emotion. There is no apparent art. The simplicity
he greatness of conception found in the mysteries are
ted. As a child, Shakespeare may have seen the old
l plays performed at Coventry. There is thus a link
en this poet of the Renascence and the poets of the
le Ages. Country instead of faith is his theme. He
ts knowledge of history as those old poets taught
on. Except for *King John*, the subject of which sets it
two hundred years apart from the others, these plays
continuous history of England over a long period, the
fifteenth century. From the day when Bolingbroke
oned the weak Richard II and founded the Lancastrian
sty, until the battle of Bosworth, when Henry VII
ted the tyrant Richard III, ended the bloodthirsty Wars
Roses and won the crown for the House of Tudor, Shake-
e brought the history of their country before the eyes
s countrymen, at a time when the Tudor line was still
ng, Elizabeth wielding her glorious and undisputed
Foreign war with its triumphs and disasters, years of
erity and of misery, glory and shame, princes heroic and
t all succeeded each other in the plays, painted almost
rtially for a public enabled at once to marvel and to learn.
akespeare keeps this breadth when he leaves London for
e and abandons Holinshed for Plutarch. Although no
r sustained by patriotism, he is upheld by the prestige
1 belongs to the great names of antiquity, and enhaloes
heads of Coriolanus, Brutus, Julius Caesar, Antony,
patra. His first care still is to breathe new life into
us men and great events. He is less scrupulously re-

spectful of truth than incapable of conceiving drama as made by the violation of truth. He is, however, entirely unconcerned to reproduce manners and costumes. Knowing nothing of the historical realism which goes by the name of

Only Jonson followed Shakespeare along this path, but he,

8. *Shakespeare's Art*.—The question whether Shakespeare is an artist is the one concerning him which was most discussed by his contemporaries and has most divided posterity.

passage: 'He had an excellent phantasy, brave notions, and gentle 'expressions' wherein he flowed with that facility that

9. Shakespeare is so abundant a writer, at times indeed to the point of excess, that Jonson inclined to deduce that he lacked self-control, that his genius ran away with him. His fellow-actors, publishing his manuscripts in 1623, gave credence to this opinion when, thinking to honour him, they stated that

'He had to be repressed.'

hought, he uttered with that easinesse that we
: received from him a blot in his papers.' Milto
n even in his loving praise of Shakespeare, callin
est Shakespeare, Fancy's child,' who warbled fort
wood-notes wild.'

judgments often rest on an antithesis. We ca
how in men's minds the learned and laborio
n came to be contrasted with the spontaneo
e. Art, by a confusion between learning and ca
s conceded to the one, genius to the other. Then
test against this view except that which, curiousl
ced by Jonson himself, who had done so much t
t. He, in the fine verses which headed the 1623 foli

'et must I not give Nature all: thy art,
Iy gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
'or though the poet's matter nature be,
Iis art doth give the fashion. And that he
Vho casts to write a living line, must sweat,
Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Jpon the Muses' anvil; turn the same,
nd himself with it, that he thinks to frame;
)r for the laurel, he may gain a scorn!
'or a good poet's made, as well as born.
nd such wert thou.

futable evidence of the great humanist who ha
personally is confirmed not only by Shakespeare'
tic work, with all its marks of loving chiselling, bu
imerous signs of corrections, some of them con-
n the several editions of the plays. The absence of
om the final manuscript is of comparatively little
idence. Moreover, while Shakespeare's work con-
amatic theory, it very clearly indicates his opinions
of acting. The celebrated scene in which Hamlet
ie actors and tries to inspire them to natural in-
n, equally removed from emphasis and flatness,
for the control which Shakespeare would have had
rcise over caprice and fancy. It is in this passage
uminating dictum occurs which hardly leaves a
the poet could be completely master of himself
borne on the wings of the most impetuous flights of
'in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say,
vind of passion, you must acquire and beget a
that may give it smoothness.' What classical
d not subscribe to this precept, even envy it?

To admit that Shakespeare gives this regulating power to wisdom is the best way of explaining the harmony which he has been able to bring into almost every one of his plays. Different though their elements be, each has its own atmosphere, and this could not regularly happen as the effect of a fortunate accident. The very freedom habitual to popular plays, the custom of mixing two or even three plots in one play, the alternation of the tragic and the comic, the concurrent use of rhymed and blank verse and prose: all contri- [illegible]

[illegible]

efface all its traces, and only patient study can reveal them in their secret, much-veiled lurking-places, hidden behind the illusion which art itself creates.

Take in *Hamlet* the fragment of a tragedy after Seneca [illegible]

[illegible]

a fine piece of declamation. Here it is true that he is doing justice to a *genre* not his own, but he is also using this sample of noble and artificial tragedy to make, by force of contrast, his own play seem entirely natural. His characters speak

while the others declaim. Or rather, his characters such, but merely men. Thus the contrast turns his c from a stage representation into very reality.

9. *Shakespeare's Empiricism.*—The factor which h most to mask Shakespeare's art is its consistency with or at least resigned acceptance of the conditions which temporary stage imposed on a dramatist, and which result of the demands and habits of the public, the po ing and methods of Shakespeare's brother actors. H essentially empirical: it takes realities into account an based on the abstract. He himself, speaking with tl of King Henry V, reveals its principle:

> There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
> Would men observingly distil it out.

In no way blind to the faults of the stage of his day, speare was as aware as any one else of the poverty scenery and the brutal taste of the 'groundlings,' 'cap nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise'; l annoyed by the misuse of clowns, who interrupted an up the most pathetic scenes with ill-timed fooling; l pained by the emphatic declamations of tragic actors he implores not to 'saw the air too much with your or 'tear a passion to tatters, to very rags.' Yet he d as a consequence, effect any riddance; he forbade nc He attempted no such return to the noble simplicity theatre of antiquity as would soon have emptied the playhouse, but endeavoured to do the best he could wi actual conditions he could not escape, galling though sc them were. Although he lacked scenery, he did not th necessary that the whole action of his plays should pas neutralized scene, some abstract place. He counted o facile imagination of his audience to conjure up what he not reproduce, and helped them with the swift, vivid de tions which he introduced into his verses. The scenery the naked stage could not provide is supplied in the te his plays. His characters and places are so closely assoc that they cannot be separated. The name of Juliet at calls up the Capulets' ball-room, or the moonlit bal or the tomb in which she lay before she died. The tre the Forest of Arden droop and rustle about Rosalind. storm blows upon the dishevelled Lear on the deserted h Hamlet waits feverishly for the ghost on the platfon

Elsinore or cracks grim jokes in the churchyard Nowhere is there more of the picturesque or of the poetry of nature than in these plays, performed with a few properties to symbolize rather than to indicate the places in which their action passed.

Similarly, instead of eliminating or disdainfully neglecting the clown, Shakespeare undertook his education, gave him guidance, and converted a necessary evil into good. Marlowe, an idealist, proclaimed his contempt for clowning and resolution to have done with it. In *Tamburlaine* he has turned the clown out, unless indeed, as may well have happened, the groundlings called him back to fool between the scenes and thus provide relaxation from the sustained sublimity of this enormous play. Marlowe would concede nothing to him. Yet when Marlowe came to write *Faustus* he had, willy-nilly, to compromise, and since he felt it beneath him carefully to write a part for the clown, he threw him, as it were, a sketch for his buffoonery and grimacing and let him fill it in for himself. The result is a play of which parts, the beginning and the end, are admirable, but which is a mere framework. [illegible]

He writes his part to fit his habitual speech, puns and all, but includes in it some better compounded and more pointed jokes. Shakespeare makes of the clown, whether he remains a boor or becomes a court fool or nobleman's jester, a sort of [illegible]

Sometimes, however, he makes a real character of the [illegible] He lends [illegible] gy dog, or [illegible] er. Or he admits him into a craft. Bottom is a weaver and, with his self-sufficiency and artlessness, has character, shown for instance in his conviction that the amusement which his stupidity affords proceeds from his wit. Bottom has won a place in the foreground of a play, for the meaning of *Midsummer Night's Dream* depends on his meeting with

Titania. Elsewhere the clown has the guise of a watchman, when he appears as Dogberry, a pompous idiot and the prototype of all the burlesque policemen of the stage. At the very end of his career Shakespeare brings the clown back to the state which was his originally before he became a professional jester. He identifies him with the country gaby whose name had clung to him, but whom he had forgotten. In *The Winter's Tale* he is an old shepherd's son, a real thick-headed, ingenuous country lad. Thus the clown who had deserted the fields for the stage is brought back to the fold.

To sum up: Shakespeare's use of the clown is often so happy and unexpected that this character could hardly be spared from Shakespearian drama. If the clown were gone, something would be missing from the whole. The purity and nobility of the plays would doubtless be enhanced, but their meaning would be restricted and their philosophy would suffer. The poet did well to think, like Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*:

> For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
> But to the earth some special good doth give.

It was this tolerance, proper to him, which enabled Shakespeare to retain the clown longer than most of his rivals, and the fact is among those which make his plays seem more archaic than theirs. Jonson and Fletcher, more innovative than he, soon got rid of the vestiges of the primitive stage which clashed with their conceptions of realism and modernity. They did not perceive the 'soul of goodness' which lurked in the clown who had become an anachronism.

Shakespeare's conservatism is more clearly shown in matters of greater consequence. He seems to have been one of the least inventive among his contemporaries. He preferred subjects of which others had made trial. Very often he did no more than work upon existing plays. Some of his masterpieces had already been tried on the stage, for instance *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Lear*. Not to speak of the doubtful *Henry VI*, it is certain that there were plays prior to his on the same subjects as *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Richard III*, *King John*, *The Merchant of Venice*, the *Henry IV* and *Henry V* trilogy, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Measure for Measure*. The same is probably true of *The Comedy of Errors*, *Richard II*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Troilus and Cressida*.

When Shakespeare's subjects had not already been drama-

tized, he generally took them, even for his comedies and romantic plays, from a book, and reproduced them, on the whole, faithfully. He borrowed the theme of *As You Like It* from a novel by Lodge, that of *The Winter's Tale* from a novel by Greene, and *All's Well that Ends Well* from one of Boccaccio's stories. *Othello* comes from a story of Cinthio, *Pericles* from old Gower's version of the Greek novel *Apol-*

are very few, nor can it be absolutely asserted that their source will not one day be discovered. They are *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, save for some insignificant passages, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Tempest*, and they are just enough to show that, if he did not usually care to create his plays entirely, he could do it when he chose. It is

symbolical plays. Each of them illustrates an idea.

comedy.

What laws does love obey? How is the thread which binds hearts spun and how is it sometimes broken? Who can ex-

wards, happily, the hearts which had gone astray beat true

blind as men. Oberon and Titania love, quarrel, are jealous of each other, are reconciled. Because the juice of a flower is dropped on her eyes, lovely little Titania is enamoured of a

soon become apparent, and its incoherence, which is no less than that of reality. They escape disappointment who hold that had the poet had a message to deliver he would have placed it in his non-dramatic work, more especially his sonnets, and that he did nothing of the sort. There is nothing in Shakespeare's philosophy which is distinctive or carries conviction. The miracle is not in the abstract thought his works contain, but in that extraordinary pliability which let

[illegible]

also, in many instances. But all this is the emanation of a vigorous dramatic genius. These scattered reflections, evoked by circumstances and deliberately self-contradictory, derive strength from their appropriateness, and are penetrating by the feeling of which they are born, as they are beautiful by the poetry of the words which clothe them. *But it is vain to hope,* by gathering them together, to arrive at a higher wisdom which was the poet's They are not maxims accumulating to produce a total result. Their number is commensurate only

[illegible]

those proverbs and popular sayings, all equally striking, all true within their limits, which contradict each other; one of them can often be matched by its exact contrary—'Like

[illegible]

Each temperament and every circumstance has in the plays its appropriate philosophy. No higher doctrine embraces and resumes them all.

Nevertheless, the deduction is allowable that the playwright's thought rarely went beyond earthly life, that [illegible]

sometimes glanced further he soon brought back his gaze to this world, which seemed to him man's all. He does indeed admit with Hamlet that human reason is limited and surrounded by a great mystery:

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Yet Hamlet himself says, 'To die: to sleep; no more,' for all that he keeps

> the dread of something after death,
> The undiscovered country from whose bourn
> No traveller returns.

Other characters in the plays make more decided denials. It may mean nothing that Macbeth, the murderer, thinks

> Life 's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

It may mean no more that Jaques, the melancholy philosopher, believes

> All the world 's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players.

Touchstone, the fool, may be left responsible for his limited view of life:

> 'It is ten o'clock:
> Thus may we see,' quoth he, 'how the world wags:
> 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,
> And after one hour more 'twill be eleven;
> And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,
> And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot;
> And thereby hangs a tale.'

It is, however, difficult to think that Prospero did not voice the poet's mature opinion when, reflectively, he averred that:

> We are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

This is to speak as a philosopher of antiquity rather than a Christian. Yet the saying was not such as to scandalize an audience of the Renascence or to mark Shakespeare's plays as more impious than those of his contemporaries. Marlowe had written more audacious lines. Shakespeare did no more than find rare and unforgettable forms in which to enclose the secular thinking of the men of his time.

11. *Poetry of Form. Style. The Power and the Excesses of*

Shakespeare.—Shakespeare's
ately effaced behind his
conditions of the stage,
form of his plays, his sty
the wealth of his gifts

th

po
fir the first poet of his day and
first of all time. The poet
exquisite songs with which
passion for beauty which is
causes the best of them to
in English poetry, attains
there has a diversity of m
sonnets with their monotonous theme and form.

Most often the fusion of dramatic and lyric elements is perfect, absolute, and beyond analysis. A whole scene is lifted to a higher mood while the proportions of its constituent elements are unmodified, and thus the pleasure of truth, which is retained, and the added pleasure of beauty are blended in strict unity.

Beauty comes of the perfection of the style and the versification, the rarity of the images, and the accompanying music. No purely lyrical poetry in English weds words or metaphors more triumphantly or contains more varied, richer, or more delicate sonorities than those which Shakespeare spontaneously and inexhaustibly produces in the blank verse of his plays. Yet the pleasure of an emotion properly dramatic is nearly always added to the pleasure of lyricism, which therefore is saved from the egoistical dilettantism fatal to enchantment. A special glory belongs to the poet who

while he follows or urges on the progress of the action which decides the fate of his puppets.

In the capital scenes of the great tragedies—the duologues of Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet's soliloquies, the scene of the awakening of Othello's jealousy, of Lear's passionate railings, or of Macbeth's hallucinations—this poetic prestige overlies a pathos which could exist without this splendour but is transfigured by it. All the translations have allowed this supreme enchantment to escape, and give, therefore, only an incomplete comprehension of the total effect. When Iago sees Othello, already ravaged by the jealousy he has put in him, coming towards him, and says:

> Not poppy, nor mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou ow'dst yesterday,

something infused in the beauty of the rhythm and the syllables transforms Iago into an infernal magician. He has been a vile rascal; he becomes a demon.

The defects of this rich genius for words are almost as glaring as its qualities are dazzling. There is on every occasion such a multitudinous flow of words and images to Shakespeare's mind as nothing seems able to dam. Ben Jonson, noticing this irrepressible impetuosity, regretted that it could not be checked: 'Sufflaminandus erat.' Images gush forth, beautiful or strange, but without order, redundant, and sometimes injurious to dramatic probability. Old John of Gaunt at his last gasp breathes out his love for England in multiplied, piled-up similes, interrupted, resumed, inexhaustible. His tirade would weary the lungs of a strong young man. The wounded soldier who relates to Duncan Macbeth's victory over the rebels heaps frenzied metaphors on to emphatic similes.

Even more often the poet yields to the temptation to be subtle. He plunges into subtlety confidently, sure that he can find a way out of the labyrinth. In the sonnets, when he is speaking in his own person, he uses and misuses subtlety immoderately. His narrative poems are full of it and it is the very web of the unending lamentations of Lucrece, Tarquin's victim. Almost all his characters, whether tragic or comic, show unexpectedly a taste for the like quintessence of wit, a joy in splitting the finest hairs. The young queen, wife to Richard II (Act II, scene ii), when she is uneasy about her husband's absence, involves herself, with a courtier who seeks to dispel her anxiety, in the maziest of arguments about

her presentiment of evil. The most subtle sonneteer would find it difficult to follow the slender threads of these highly

ein
e a
ied
nce
tic
genius and his realism. It brings on to the stage a superfluity of lyricism both ill-timed and out of place. It endows the
with
ysis.
it is
bably
true
and
style
eloquence, Jonson's vigorous realism, Dekker's easy grace, Middleton's dry precision, Fletcher's rather superficial distinction, and Massinger's oratorical swing make their plays more lucid than his, leave fewer difficulties to be solved and

expression, for variants on the current uses of speech, and the hearer and even the reader must consequently exert ingenuity to understand him. This habit of mind, usually dropped when a play reaches its intensest moment, is especially manifest in secondary scenes in which the dramatic instinct does not restrain him. It expresses a natural tendency which needed to be controlled and repressed by a superior necessity of the action of the play.

12. *Shakespeare's Universality.*—We have shown, more or less clearly, the link which joins Shakespeare to his contemporaries, how he was like them and how he surpassed them. The study has been much too limited for a poet who, in Jonson's words, 'was not of an age, but for all time.' So astonishingly widespread is his glory, that it might also be said that 'he was not of a land, but of all lands.' We ought

to notice certain other characteristics which distinguish him from his English rivals less than they place him in opposition to the classical drama. The most important of all is the frequent complexity of his characters, which, as a rule, are not represented only within the short span of a crisis. Shakespeare took advantage of the wide allowance of space under his dramatic system, the twenty or so scenes into which each of his plays is, on an average, divided, and showed his heroes at various moments of their lives, in changing situations and in colloquy with different persons. They are not obliged to sustain one attitude, but have time to move and alter. No simple principle accounts for them. They have life and life's indefiniteness, and therefore they are not always fully intelligible, but are mysteries. It is even possible to ask whether Shakespeare himself understood them all. Had he an analytical comprehension of Hamlet? The watchmaker understands the watch he has made, but 'it is a wise father that knows his own child.' Thus it is that many Shakespearian beings, whose reality cannot for an instant be questioned, do not admit of too precise investigation or are differently interpreted by different critics. But even as they evolve and their complexity increases, an art of which the secret escapes us preserves the illusion of their identity through all their changes.

Another great characteristic of Shakespeare's genius is an undefinable alertness and mobility which keep attention on the stretch. His prodigious vitality remains unimpaired after three centuries. It seems to grow every time he is read. Something of the mystery belongs to him which Enobarbus noticed in Cleopatra's charm:

> Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
> Her infinite variety: other women cloy
> The appetites they feed: but she makes hungry
> Where most she satisfies.

There is no other work, however beautiful, that does not seem monotonous after Shakespeare. Free of every theory, accepting all of life, rejecting nothing, uniting the real and the poetic, appealing to the most various men, to a rude workman as to a wit, Shakespeare's drama is a great river of life and beauty. All who thirst for art or truth, the comic or the tender, ecstasy or satire, light or shade, can stoop to drink from its waters, and at almost every instant of their changing moods find the one drop to slake their thirst.

CHAPTER VII

SHAKESPEARE'S CONTEMPORARIES AND IMMEDIATE SUCCESSORS[1]

1. *George Chapman.*[2]—Shakespeare's rivals were found, as might be expected, in the camp of the humanists. The hostility first shown to him by Greene and the university poets was renewed by Chapman and Jonson. Not that these playwrights took from him, more than others, his foremost place in the popular favour, but they seem, from time to time, to have trumpeted more loudly than the rest their literary qualifications, the attainments which they could contrast arrogantly with Shakespeare's slight equipment of learning, his 'small Latin and less Greek.'

George Chapman (1559?–1634), famous for his translation of Homer, began to write plays somewhat late in life, when he was nearly forty years old. In so doing he seems less to have followed a vocation than to have been attracted by the extraordinary popularity of the theatre. Men who would in any other period have held aloof from the stage at this time wrote comedies and tragedies for the sake of applause as much as money.

Except that he was a great reader of Greek and Latin

and clarity of intelligence. He possessed, on the other hand, and to a rare degree, the romantic exaltation of the Elizabethans with its qualities and defects. He shared their flights and falls, their audacities of style, their moments of nobility and splendour, their long intervals of senselessness

and obscurity. Saved from extravagance when he was kept within bounds by the author he was translating, he was apt to flounder when he adventured alone. He had not the guidance of reason or good taste or even that of mere good sense.

His magniloquence and his assured self-confidence were none the less imposing. He made others share his own belief that he was possessed of a poetic demon. It is to-day generally accepted that he is the rival poet to whom Shakespeare, in his sonnets, gives praise mixed with irony. He speaks of 'the proud full sail of his great verse,' and of

> his spirit, by spirits taught to write
> Above a mortal pitch.

Chapman's talent has most relation to the frenzied genius of Marlowe, whose senior he was by five years and whose impetuous eloquence he admired. He concluded Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, revived Tamburlaine's declaiming in his tragedies, and followed the example of Marlowe's *Massacre at Paris* by seeking subjects for gloomy plays in contemporary French history.

His best-known tragedies are *Bussy d'Ambois*, which may have been written as early as 1598, although it was not published until 1607, *The Revenge of Bussy d'Ambois* (Ambois stands for Amboise), published in 1614, and *The Conspiracy*, followed by *The Tragedy of Charles, Duke of Biron*, both published in 1608. The subject of the first two of these plays goes back to the reign of Henry III of France. They are concerned with Bussy, the famous bully and lover of the Countess of Montsoreau whom Dumas made so popular two hundred and fifty years later. Biron is the marshal who was the friend of Henry IV and who betrayed his master, was pardoned, repeated his offence while he was ambassador in London, was called upon to confess what he had done, and, on his refusal, was put to death in 1602. Chapman closely follows the English translation, published in 1607, of the versions of this affair by Serres and Mathieu. Since Henry IV was still alive he could hardly have found a more recent topic. The French ambassador protested, in spite of the fine part which the king is made to play, and backed his protest by citing a prohibition to actors to bring any living Christian king on the stage. Both the events and the characters of the play are historical. Chapman is one of the few authors of the day who attempted to represent Frenchmen without

caricature. But his work is diffuse; it contains too much speechifying and too little movement. The characters are monotonous. Biron is too constantly an arrogant braggart. Yet, for all that this central figure is swollen with conceit and animated by immoderate ambition, the ten acts devoted to him are Chapman's most measured and correct contribution to tragedy.

[illegible] Chapman's most [illegible] whose head was [illegible] ginous lyricist, is seen at work upon a melodrama.

Following an unknown source, he shows a complete ignorance of the real France, but has no satirical intention. He mingles authentic facts with his own inventions. He transforms Bussy into a stage hero, after Marlowe, and lends him a power of wild declamation. This Bussy has placed his incredible valour at the service first of the Duke of Anjou, the king's brother, and then of the king himself, and the [illegible]

not because he loves her but out of bravado and revenge. He claims the right himself to do justice to himself. Unfortunately he not only is the vehicle for the poet's independence, but must also bear the burden of his foggiest metaphors.

[illegible]

This study of a devout woman, a Puritan in love, is, if not very true or coherent, both interesting and new. Situations proper to comedy are introduced in the midst of the most tragic plot. Tamyra is known at the court of Henry III [illegible]

as a matron should. Yet at the very moment when she is thus finely defending herself, she has ceased to be a virtuous wife. Irresistible passion had, from her first meeting with

him, swept her on towards surrender to the brilliant Bussy in all the bravery of his daring. She is dazzled so that she can hardly hide her feeling from other women. It is all she can do not to betray her jealousy of the Duchess of Guise whom she believes Bussy to love, and whose guilty passion she blames with her lips while she envies it in her heart. Love has stricken her suddenly and irresistibly; she is the victim of fatality. When she had made up her mind to sin she still preserves the appearance of virtue, not only before her husband, whom she betrays, but also before her confessor, the Friar, her tool and accomplice, and even before the very lover to whom she gives herself. This dualism, persistently continued to the end of the play, is as much in the nature of a satire on feminine hypocrisy as part of the portrait of a real woman. Bussy, when once he is Tamyra's lover, cannot refrain from mocking her Puritan scruples, whereupon she tremblingly invokes the God whose wrath she fears, but immediately afterwards, when her husband returns, makes up for her piety by a double dose of lies.

All through these scenes we feel that Chapman is on the brink of a very bold and very penetrating psychological study, but his hand is not sure enough and he deviates into the improbable. The idea of treating frailty and hypocrisy no longer, after the manner of the fabliaux, as comic, but as grievous and agonizing, is interesting. With a little more knowledge of the heart, Chapman might here have written Shakespearian scenes. But he would first have had to render his Tamyra plausible, and this he fails to do. In the remainder of the play she endures so much torture that she becomes pathetic. Her husband, when he knows himself betrayed, compels her, stabbing her with his dagger, to write a letter which causes Bussy to fall into an ambush. The remorse she still feels wrings from her a cry which is really moving:

> Heaven, I ask thee remission of my sins,
> Not of my pains.

The story of the love of Bussy and Tamyra forms the best part of this unequal tragedy, and deserved to save it from Dryden's absolute condemnation, merited though this be by the copious declaiming of Bussy, whose life certainly gave him no right to the pose of a champion of virtue assigned to him by Chapman. Dryden had Bussy's tirades in mind when

he defined this play: 'a dwarfish thought, dressed up in gigantic words, repetition in abundance, looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles; the sense of one line expanded prodigiously into ten; and, to sum up all, uncorrect English, and a hideous mingle of false poetry and true nonsense.'

As compared with this first play on Bussy, that which shows the hero's revenge is as much less dramatic as it is more reasonable. It is Chapman's *Hamlet*. The hero, this time, is Clermont d'Ambois(e), Bussy's brother, whom Bussy's ghost incites to vengeance, but who is too philosophical not to hold violence in horror, so that he delays long before he accomplishes his task. When he has avenged Bussy he kills himself.

It is something of a surprise to find that Chapman also attempted comedy, and not without success. His best comedies are *All Fools*, printed in 1605, and *Monsieur d'Olive* and *The Gentleman Usher*, published in 1606. Here he abandons his forced, uneasy lyricism, if not his habit of moralizing. The value of the plays lies in a certain pleasant romanticism rather than in their character-drawing. *All Fools*, modelled on Terence, is a lesson to fathers: the indul- [illegible] painted in contrast, Chapman [illegible] enign of the two. *Monsieur* [illegible] of character: it represents a [illegible] wittedness and coolness are amusing, but who is dropped all too soon in favour of another plot. Chapman's best claim to merit as a writer of comedy rests on his collaboration with Ben Jonson and Marston in *Eastward Ho*, but it is nearly impossible to determine the part he had in the composition of this excellent satire on middle-class manners of which we shall have to speak later.

2. *Ben Jonson (1573?–1637).*[1]—Chapman had almost nothing of the humanist except his erudition. By temperament

[illegible]

Conspiracy, ed. by L. H. Harris (1921) [illegible]

(En [illegible]

M. [illegible]

Jon [illegible]

the Age of Jonson (1937).

he was a romantic, and except when he took a ghost from Seneca or a theme from Terence, he followed the free methods of the popular English theatre. The man who resolutely took up the position of a disciple of the ancients, and attempted, under their inspiration, to reform the English stage, was Ben Jonson. He it is who in his own time and ever afterwards provided the typical antithesis to Shakespeare. The honour is one he deserves, because his works have real value and because his attitude was conspicuous.

His lengthy career as a dramatist (1597–1633), the relatively large amount of extant information regarding his life and character, his combativeness which brought him into conflict with several of his fellow-playwrights, the numerous allusions and satirical portraits in his plays, his expositions of theory, and his sarcastic references to his public, perhaps make him, rather than Shakespeare, the rightful centre for a study of Renascence drama. He belongs moreover to the generation, born some ten years after Shakespeare, which was the most prolific of variously talented writers. He was the contemporary of Dekker, Marston, Middleton, Fletcher, Tourneur, Webster, and Thomas Heywood, with every one of whom he was connected: he was the friend of some and quarrelled with several others.

In one sense, if the mark of originality be resistance to the general current, he was more original than Shakespeare. Shakespeare accepts the conditions of the stage of his time, is aware of its shortcomings, but resigns himself to them with a smile. His relations with his public remain sympathetic. Jonson, however, is in angry and arrogant opposition to the Elizabethan stage, and sets up his own tastes, ideas, and theories, all derived from the ancients, against the popular taste. Shakespeare follows with docility the course of the stream; Jonson flings his vast bulk against it.

A pupil, at Westminster School, of William Camden, the famous antiquary, and a graduate of Cambridge, Jonson was truly learned. Throughout his life he copied into a notebook passages which struck him during his reading of the ancients, and he repeatedly had recourse to these excerpts when he was writing, adapting them, if necessary, to the circumstances of his own time. He was acquainted not only with the great writers of antiquity but also with forgotten, mediocre authors and with the commentators and critics. He was as well read in the historians as in the poets. When he brings antiquity

back to life his work is amply documented and he betrays an accurate conception of manners and customs. When he paints the society of his own day, he has made an equally careful preliminary study, notebook in hand and has like a modern [illegible] in Italy, but almost at once he changed it to London, showing clearly that the characters he has sketched are English and the outcome of direct observation.

We are introduced to a set of eccentrics. Each has his particular 'humour,' his prevailing mood or rather his oddity, mental habit, or fad. Jonson wishes to make humour the capital characteristic on which all others depend, but it is individual oddities that he mainly portrays. His method is that of Dickens, whose cheerfulness he however lacks, for he is a satirist rather than an amusing writer, and painstaking rather than spontaneous. The fixed, narrow limits of his characterization were opposed to the uses of contemporary playwrights, who gave their characters full play, developing them spaciously and endowing them, even to excess, with complexity and the faculty of growth so that they sometimes became incoherent. These other dramatists made stereotyped oddity the characteristic only of their secondary characters. It was only to the Pistols and the Nyms that Shakespeare gave 'humours.' Jonson bestows them on all his characters, and especially the principals. In his play there is an old gentleman who is exaggeratedly worried because his son, a young poet, is sowing his wild oats. it is the father's 'humour' thus to plague himself. There is a merchant whose 'humour' it is to be a jealous husband; two young self-confident and foolish fops, the town gull and the country gull, exist but to be duped; an honest, optimistic magistrate has unshakable faith in the virtues of a cup of sack; and Bobadil, a blusterer of a new kind, takes every one in by his decorous manners, his reticence like that of a man sure of himself, and the calm voice in which he utters his improbable boasts

eccentricity and extravagance of their subjects: Deliro, the idolizing husband consistently rebuffed by the wife; Puntarvolo, the mad, quixotic gentleman who lives a chivalrous [illegible] errant's challenge; Fastidious Brisk, the courtier absorbed by his own dress and fatuous as a Molière marquis, who fights with another courtier a comic duel in which not a drop of blood is shed, but the two lacerate each other's smart clothes and ornaments; Fungoso, the law-student who imitates Fastidious Brisk and extorts money from his father to copy his clothes but can never keep up with his model, who has always adopted a new fashion just when the copy is complete; Sordido, the miserly father and assiduous peruser of almanacks, who thinks of hanging himself in order to prove the prophets wrong.

It is curious to find this extravagance within a realistic framework and introduced in the tones of realism. This play and its predecessor reproduce so much that belongs to the manners of their time, that London and London life in 1600 might be partly reconstituted with their aid. Much trouble and investigation has gone to produce the abundant details, and yet the result is ungrateful, tedious in the extreme, scrappy, and seldom amusing. We are surfeited with satire and sigh in vain for a scene which would simply show humanity. The approval which Jonson constantly claims from his audience, and his ill-will to every one and everything and faith in himself and his own superiority are moreover irritating. His preoccupation with himself is in contrast to the modesty with which Shakespeare invariably sinks his personality in his work, is never to be found or seen. Jonson deems his personal quarrels interesting enough to furnish scenes for his plays or even whole plays. He, the representative of reason, morality, and knowledge, does not fear to bring his enemies upon the stage. *Cynthia's Revels* (1601) and, even more, *The Poetaster* (1602) are so many acts of homage to himself, not to mention the prologues, epilogues and inductions in which he obtrudes his personality.

In *The Poetaster* he is Horace, whose friend is Virgil, whose admirer is Augustus, and to whom the bad poets Crispinus (Marston) and Demetrius (Dekker) are jealous enemies. Nothing opposes him save foolishness, envy, and malignity.

sacrificing honour, child, or wife to his chance of engrossing the inheritance. Between Volpone, the Fox, and these appropriately named beasts of prey—the lawyer, Voltore or

Malta. Yet the enormity of the fraud he has organized is

property. In yet another and no less ferocious scene, Volpone, who has been given up to justice, is shown standing his trial. Each of his dupes comes forward to speak for him, each of them warmly eloquent, improving on the statement of the

threads of his plot, and the strong construction render almost credible the inhuman situation which is the subject of the play. But its success is void of the element of fun, for the atrocity of the satire excludes laughter. In *Epicoene*, however, Jonson aims at producing merriment. For once he sacrifices his moral to his design of pleasing the public. Some scenes in his plays are intended, he says,

> for ladies, some for lords, knights, 'squires;
> Some for your waiting-wench, and city wires,
> Some for your men, and daughters of Whitefriars

He has suddenly passed from one extreme to the other. His theme is no longer execrable vice, but a whim, an oddity. Fundamentally *Epicoene* is of the nature of a farce, but it is at least as robustly constructed as *Volpone*, so that Dryden regarded it as the model of a well-made comedy. The chief character is Morose, an egoistical bachelor who nowadays would be called a neurasthenic. His special 'humour' is

his abhorrence of noise. He lives in a blind alley, and makes war on all who cry their wares in the street, has his front-door muffled, keeps his shutters closed, and quilts his staircase. His servants have orders to answer him only by signs: his own voice is the only noise he will tolerate. Jonson took this character not from real life, but from the pages of the Greek rhetorician Libanius, and he lodged him in London among thoroughly English eccentrics.

The subject of the comedy is Morose's marriage to a young girl reputed to be always silent. He marries her in order to disinherit his nephew to whom he has taken a dislike. But the girl has been secretly chosen for his uncle by this mischievous nephew, and she is no sooner married than she proves talkative and noisy to the last degree. The wedding is an excuse for a boisterous hubbub which maddens the old man. He wants a divorce before the day is out, and pretexts for it are vainly sought in a learnedly grotesque consultation with pretended lawyers. Finally the nephew agrees to save his uncle in return for a goodly sum of money, paid cash down, and reveals that the bride is a youth disguised for the occasion.

The situation lends itself to scenes of pure clowning: Morose is surrounded by a most heterogeneous company, all, naturally, as noisy as they can be—a barber, a coxcomb, an amateur of sport and a whole society of *précieuses ridicules*. Energetically, perhaps too assiduously, the play calls for laughter. Even when he is writing farce, Jonson is weighted with the spoils of his learned reading and the raw scraps of realism which he pours into his prose. The fruits of his observation mingle strangely with curiosities he has culled from the ancients. He lacks spontaneity; like Flaubert, he is too industrious and too learned to evoke light laughter.

In *The Alchemist* he returns to satirical comedy. Once more he is denouncing rogues. Face, a servant, brings a swindler named Subtle to his master's house while the latter is absent in London. Subtle poses as an alchemist, and the hope of the philosopher's stone causes men of every kind to have resort to him—a lawyer's clerk, a tobacconist, and a great gentleman, Sir Epicure Mammon, who is constantly preoccupied by dreams of magnificence and voluptuous desires. Among these seekers after gold are two Puritan brethren of Amsterdam who give the playwright his first real chance to ridicule the sect hostile to the stage. In this remarkably constructed comedy, which, unlike its pre-

decessors, has a theme of lasting interest longer-lived than alchemy—the exploitation of the foolish and the vicious by unscrupulous rogues who dazzle them with riches—prominence is chiefly given to the rhetoric of Sir Epicure, whose rodomontade recalls Marlowe, and to the intrigues of the Puritans. The whole of this nascent sect is resumed in the sinuous, politic and adroit pastor Tribulation Wholesome, and in the stupid, violent, uncompromising deacon Ananias, whom, not without difficulty, the pastor forces to accept the

In the end dupers and dupes are, needless to say, duly punished.

Bartholomew Fair returns, with more insistence, to the attack on Puritanism. The chief character is Rabbi Zeal-of-the-Land Busy, a man of low origin who has acquired a great renown for sanctity and who, like Molière's Tartuffe in Orgon's family, has wormed himself into the confidence of the well-to-do Widow Purecraft until nothing is done in her household without his advice. Thus, when Mrs. Littlewit, the daughter of the house, is seized with a longing to eat pig at the fair, Busy's consent is first asked and is given on condition the pig 'be eaten with a reformed mouth.' Every one then sets out for the fair, where Busy guzzles more than any one else, and in his cups upsets a hawker's basket of gingerbread, which he calls a 'basket of popery.' He is put in the stocks, and concludes by interrupting a puppet-show which he regards as a symbol of the public stage, that abomination of abominations.

have chosen one or other of these alternatives. Similarly, his Mistress Purecraft is both a good and pious dupe and an

gives him an excuse for introducing a whole rabble of sharpers, vagabonds, and ruffians and a whole troop of boobies, oddities, and madcaps who haunt the stalls. All his comedies are rich in details taken from life and glimpses of actual manners, but no other so much so as *Bartholomew Fair*, for which he certainly made copious notes on the spot.

It was the last of his great comedies. After its appearance he ceased for nine years to work for the stage, and resumed playwriting as an older and enfeebled man of lessened powers, producing five further plays in the period called his dotage. They are *The Devil is an Ass* (1616), *The Staple of News* (1625), *The New Inn* (1629), *The Magnetic Lady* (1632), and *A Tale of a Tub* (1633). Mediocre though they be, the observation they show of manners and passing fashions makes them interesting to this day to the social historian.

(*b*) His Roman Tragedies.—Jonson made two attempts at historical tragedy, *Sejanus* (1603) and *Catiline* (1611). Both, but especially the first, were inspired by the desire to emulate Shakespeare, the great success of whose *Julius Caesar*, in 1601, had proved that the public could be interested in a subject taken from ancient history. Jonson was conscious that his knowledge of Roman history was far more exact than his rival's. He must have laughed at Shakespeare's anachronisms, if they did not scandalize him. Shakespeare's Rome was London, and he had a very scanty and inaccurate knowledge of Roman customs and manners, of all that goes to make local colour. His only guide was Plutarch, who is psychologist and moralist first of all, who writes of a period remote from his own, and who, further, is a Greek, all of which prevents him from paying attention to the Roman *décor*.

Shakespeare's shortcomings were supplied by Ben Jonson, whose tragedies are completely historical, reinforced by a thousand accurate details taken from the many and various poets and historians he had read. He studs his *Sejanus* with translated quotations, small incidents and curious touches borrowed from the authors of the period: Suetonius, Juvenal, Tacitus, and Seneca. When he published the play he could cite the very editions which had been his sources. But while Shakespeare chose a subject familiar to every one who had any culture at all, one made illustrious by the names of Caesar, Brutus, Antony, and Octavius and centring round the most famous episode in Roman history, Caesar's murder in full Senate, Ben Jonson's erudite reading and disdain of the

immediately popular turned his choice to the far less known career of Sejanus, whose triumph and fall he depicts. With his dominantly satirical temperament, he was attracted to this episode of the Roman decadence which shows vice and meanness conspicuously, rather than to the grandeur of such [illegible]

he attempted to bring classical unity back into historical drama. He too used the expedient of a series of great, animated pictures, and they are neither less numerous nor less various than Shakespeare's. The action of his plays is perhaps a little closer knit, but this is a difference not of kind but of degree. It might even be said that Jonson gives more space than Shakespeare to homely scenes in the spirit of harsh, satirical comedy. No less than Shakespeare does he depart from the type of tragedy which *Gorboduc* inaugurated and Sidney recommended. His ambition to be an historian, to reproduce the manners and customs of imperial Rome faithfully, made a number of separate scenes even more necessary to him than to Shakespeare.

Sejanus is so strongly constructed, presents history so honestly, and is so full of vigorous and exact touches, that it cannot be read even to-day without respect for the author's learning and energy of mind. He reproduces forcefully the suspicious, perfidious, cringing, sinuous Tiberius who enjoys watching popular hatred accumulate against his favourite, and delivers that unfortunate to the people as soon as he begins to fear him. Jonson supplies a moral explanation of the fall of Sejanus in his impiety—his mockery of all the deities save the goddess Fortune, to whom indeed he renders homage, but whose images he throws down when she answers his prayer unfavourably. The philosophy of Sejanus is, like that of Marlowe's sinners, Machiavellian. With special force Jonson paints imperial corruption and the plague of informers. His pictures of manners overshadow his character-drawing. Thus we have the scene in which Livia plots the murder of her husband Drusus with Sejanus and her doctor Eudemus, and discourses learnedly of make-up and rouge while she continues her toilet; the scene in which an agent of the emperor, after hiding informers behind the door, entraps the honourable Sabinus by declaiming against tyranny in his presence, until he too begins a rebellious speech, at the first

word of which he is led off to the Gemoniae; and finally the famous scene in which the tortuous letter of Tiberius is read to the Senate and the anxious servility of the senators is displayed as, one after another, they fawn on Sejanus, then shun him like the plague, and finally, with one accord, clamour for his death.

Everywhere there is strength, dignity, knowledge—indeed too much knowledge, too much erudition, too much massive, dull speechifying. The sources of true dramatic emotion are never sounded. Thus Sejanus is shown arranging with Livia the disappearance of Drusus, whom they decide to murder, but there is no scene to show Sejanus persuading Livia to this act, the scene to which a Shakespeare or a Racine would have given precedence over all others, making it the great moment of the play. The psychology of *Sejanus* is little less elementary than that of the moralities, which divided mankind into good and bad. None of the characters goes through any interior conflict. The honest senators are not tempted, the informers suffer no remorse. The characters are very close to history, too close perhaps, for they remain remote from us. They are not brought nearer by imagination and dramatic sympathy.

Jonson, on his own confession, felt some repentance for his transgression of classical laws in this play, the liberties he took with the unity of time and his failure to use choruses. He did better in *Catiline*, in which he announces his intention to be correct and draws nearer to Seneca. This tragedy opens with a speech by Sulla's shade, who appears to Catiline. Each act, except the last, ends with a chorus. The subject, confined to Catiline's conspiracy without going back to its causes, is more restricted in time. But these entirely external differences do not prevent this play from being cast in the mould traditional in England. It is divided into twenty scenes. Its action is less straightforward than that of *Sejanus*, because in the first two acts Jonson transposes history for the purposes of poetry and satire, while in the other three he follows history step by step, so literally that he reproduces Cicero's first Catilinarian oration almost in its entirety. Faithfulness in this part of the play is very like slavishness.

On the whole, *Catiline* is inferior to *Sejanus*. The characters are drawn less vigorously and clearly. It is impossible to tell whether Catiline is actuated by cupidity, anger, or love for his mistress Orestilla. Does he really love Orestilla

or does he make her his tool? We do not know. Cicero is as wordy and complex as history shows him. He retains all the vagueness of mere history, for Jonson does not so much interpret documents as empty their contents into his tragedy. No light supplied by the poet is shed on the actors in the drama, whose figures are clear or dim as history left them, even such confused history as that constituted by the conflicting narratives of Cicero and Sallust.

In this imperfect play there is, however, one whole act which is as much of a success as anything Ben Jonson ever wrote. It is the second act, which was invented by the playwright and illustrates the same truth as Scribe's *Verre d'eau*, namely that the greatest events of history sometimes have the most trifling causes.

How was the conspiracy discovered? To tell us this, Jonson transports us to the house of the young and beautiful courtesan Fulvia. She is jealous of Sempronia, a scholarly and lettered patrician who makes up for her faded charms by her wit and her hospitable table. Sempronia, visiting Fulvia, recommends Catiline as a candidate for the consulate, and no more is needed to secure him the courtesan's ill-will. Her lover is Curius, who happens to be among the conspirators and whom she dismisses because he is ruined. He thereupon breaks into vague threats, telling her she will wish him back, for presently he will be one of the masters of Rome. Her countenance changes; she recalls him, and with flattery and caresses extorts from him his secret, giving him her love once more on condition that he betrays Catiline. Thus Cicero is warned and enabled to compass the ruin of the conspirators. These cynical scenes are in Jonson's most spirited vein, already displayed when he was writing *Volpone*. Ferocious satire is the special distinguishing mark of his talent, and recurs at the most impressive moments of his tragedies as of his comedies.

Yet there was a poet in this robust and harsh writer. The fact becomes clear as we read his fragment of a pastoral, *The Sad Shepherd, or A Tale of Robin Hood*, in which he pleasantly disposes factitious pastoral graces about the popular archer and his companions. It is made even clearer by the numerous masques which he wrote for the court of James I.[1] No one composed a greater number of books of words for the magnificent operas which were then the supreme luxury of the king and his lords. No one turned them more cleverly, wrote

[1] See P. Reyber, *Les Masques anglais* (1909).

Marlowe, describes with metaphors almost as foggy and disjointed as Chapman's, piles up pedantic, trivial, and mouth-filling words. This is the very Crispinus caricatured by Jonson in *The Poetaster*, who, after a dose, vomits up a fantastic rigmarole. Marston's description of a storm in *Antonio* [illegible]

a story which might be classed with the tales of Theban atrocity or the legend of Pelops. Marston's most detestably emphatic passages are interspersed with nervous eloquence. [illegible]

treated as a brother and who trusts him entirely. The ghost of Antonio's father cries out for vengeance and shames him out of his pity. These romantic shudders connect Marston with Kyd and Webster.

There is also much of Shakespeare in him, or rather, since *Antonio's Revenge* is possibly prior to *Hamlet*, he has more than one point of contact with Shakespeare. This is even more apparent in his comedy, *The Malcontent* (1601?), than in his tragedies. He introduces into this play a character who ironically comments on actions and personalities, underlines whatever is ridiculous or vicious, and deals blows right and left, and who voices Marston's own pessimism and cynical view of human motives. *The Malcontent* might be called a *Hamlet* which only a happy ending saves from tragedy. In some respects it also anticipates *Measure for Measure* and even *The Tempest*.

[illegible]

pardon to the guilty. The interest of this ill-constructed comedy, with its very romantic episodes, lies in the sneers

and the invectives of the Malcontent. The play centres in this true satirist who inveighs against all and sundry and proffers cynical reflections. It has, moreover, here and there, striking situations of which some are new. There is a scene, recalled by Jonson in *Sejanus*, in which the courtiers crowd round the Malcontent when he is in favour, but leave him shamelessly when the duke looks coldly at him; and another in which the usurper's wife, who with her lover had plotted his death, hears at a court ball the false news that he is dead and interrupts her informer by calling for music. Ford remembered this last incident when he wrote *The Broken Heart*. Over and over again in this play there are bold and compact touches. The sarcasm which was to be Hamlet's is expressed more vulgarly and often coarsely. The Malcontent, consoling the usurper for the loss of the duchy, exhorts him as follows: 'Come, be not confounded: . . . Think this: this earth is the only grave and Golgotha wherein all things that live must rot; 'tis but the draught wherein the heavenly bodies discharge their corruption; the very muck-hill on which the sublunary orbs cast their excrements.'

The work is on the whole unpleasing, obscure in style and muddled in construction, but it is forceful, varied, and not without interest. It proves that plays of the type of *Hamlet* were popular before the appearance of the ultimate *Hamlet* which was Shakespeare's. It seems to have been Marston who introduced the fashion of inveighing against society and life in a mood of lyrical irony. He attempts to outdo others by shouting louder than they. He often recalls or anticipates Shakespearian subjects, and for moments at a time he does not lose too much by the consequent comparison.

Marston's other comedies are less gloomy and have, as well as more cheerfulness, some flashes of tenderness. *The Dutch Courtesan* (1604) is a pendant to Dekker's *Honest Whore*, and the order in which the two plays appeared is doubtful. The heroine is no penitent Magdalen, cleansing her soul by sacrifice, but a passionate and potentially criminal woman.

Franceschina, a courtesan, has for some time been loved by young Freevill, a libertine who has sown his wild oats and aspires to the hand of a pure young girl, Beatrice. He introduces the courtesan to one of his friends, an austere and morose young man named Malheureux, who falls in love with her at first sight. But she is still in love with Freevill and is

Malheureux is no criminal: he warns Freevill, who agrees to disappear temporarily in order that his friend may announce his death to Franceschina and receive his promised reward.

Meanwhile the course of Freevill's love for Beatrice has been crossed as the result of Franceschina's plotting and his own desire to put his beloved to trial. Beatrice believes that Freevill is dead and has been unfaithful. She is miserable and has thoughts of killing herself, but in the end everything turns out well.

the rogue Cockledemoy on a miserly, stupid, and ridiculous citizen. Miscellaneous obscenities are scattered here and there and spoken by episodic characters.

The psychology is slight and the portrait of the courtesan rudimentary, yet there is something of everything in this play, even feeling and grace. Marston professes a desire to contrast the purity of legitimate love with the base and dangerous love of courtesans. His Beatrice is not without charm and Freevill courts her with a certain warmth.

The most individualized character is, however, Crispinella, Beatrice's younger sister. This child of fifteen, small of stature, terrifyingly outspoken, an innocent girl who talks like a trooper, who calls a spade a spade and utters everything she knows or thinks, is the ancestress of all the alarmingly frank young people of Restoration comedies. Marston is, naturally, too foul-mouthed to keep her within the limits beyond which frankness of this kind is disgusting rather than amusing. But he makes it very clear that, for all her loose talk, he intends to preserve both the true virginity and the real goodness of heart of his Crispinella. Artistically, her chief defect is that she is too self-conscious, too cognizant of

her implications, yet she has to her credit some spontaneous, apposite, and amusing sayings.

She was certainly inspired by the witty and incisive Beatrice of *Much Ado about Nothing*, and her relations with her elder sister recall those of Beatrice with her cousin Hero. It is a great pity that this happily conceived character is often soiled by cynicism, to the detriment of the pleasure which decent people might otherwise derive from her.

The same coarseness mars *The Parasitaster, or The Fawn*, of which the idea is ingenious. The Duke of Ferrara is distressed by the coldness of his son Tiberio, who will not consent to marriage even with the fair Dulcimella, daughter of Gonzago, Duke of Urbino. The duke pretends to ask her hand for himself, and sends Tiberio to Urbino as his ambassador. Meanwhile, like the Malcontent, he adopts a disguise. As the Fawn, a privileged cynic, he establishes himself in Gonzago's court both to watch over his son and to observe the manners of the courtiers. There are curious sights to be seen there, and some ugly characters—an abominably jealous husband whom his virtuous wife at last succeeds in taming, a man who brags of his love affairs in high places and has in fact lost his heart to a washerwoman, a youthful courtier who declares his passion to all the ladies indiscriminately.

Dulcimella has, however, fallen in love with Tiberio. To impart warmth to this icy suitor, she uses the same device as Molière's Agnès, making Gonzago, her foolish father, her go-between. He conveys to the young man her pretended anger at his attempts to win her, and thus instructs him in the course he should pursue. In this way she makes sure of getting him for her husband.

To sum up: this play contains a successful comic character—old Gonzago, the solemn idiot, reminiscent of Justice Shallow and Polonius, who never doubts his own sagacity even when he is being led by the nose—and some pretty love-scenes between Dulcimella and Tiberio. Dulcimella is like a coarse copy of one of Shakespeare's daring heroines. She has none of their poetry and not more than a quarter of their wit.

Marston's signature is also affixed to a powerful play, *The Insatiate Countess*, which depicts the furious love-affairs of a woman of the Messalina type and was printed in 1613. This work seems, however, to owe far less to Marston than to the actor William Barkstead, who was his collaborator.

and Jonson. This work, which unites qualities evinced in

realism, Jonson so much light-heartedness, or Marston such decency.

The very simple theme recalls the moralities. The industrious and the idle apprentice are drawn side by side, and they furnished Hogarth, when the play was revived in the eighteenth century, with the subject of one of his best-known works.

model husband, and model friend.

The two apprentices are balanced by Touchstone's two daughters, the younger well-behaved, sweet-tempered, and modest; the older, a minx, ambitious to be fashionable, who, with the connivance of her pretentious mother, marries not an honest apprentice, like her sister, but a certain Sir Petronel
[illegible] ters herself that she will
[illegible] a fine house. But the
[illegible] while she is journeying
thither very dashingly, having first shown her contempt for her citizen family, Petronel is planning to flee to Virginia with her dowry. He is put into prison, and vanity is duly brought low, the elder sister being obliged to implore mercy from the younger and from her father, to both of whom she has been amply disdainful.

This morality play has much animation. It affords some

vivid glimpses—the apprentices living in their master's household, the interior of his shop, vainglorious Gertrude starting off in her coach, dazzling all the neighbours. The apprentice Quicksilver, an assiduous playgoer, recites lines from *The Spanish Tragedie* in his cups. In a tavern the madcaps of the town are seen all agape while Captain Seagull relates to them the marvels of Virginia, where the first settlers were soon to meet with an evil fate.

In a scene laid by the Thames, Sir Petronel and Quicksilver, the one as drunk as the other, plunge into the water during a storm in order to swim to Captain Seagull's ship, and are cast up on to the river-bank. Still fuddled, they imagine that they have landed in France.

The drawing of the characters, especially the less virtuous of them, is vigorous. Quicksilver with his scapegrace high spirits, his rascality and his conversion, and the moral ballads in which he embodies his adventures for the edification of his prison-mates; Gertrude with the airs she gives herself and the romantic dreams in which she still indulges long after misfortune has overtaken her: these are memorable portraits.

There is throughout this play a lively realism which gains credence for the moral concealed beneath its varied and comic incidents. And all goes merrily forward to the end. No structural devices obtrude themselves.

Whatever part Marston may have had in the writing of this play, it does him greater credit than any which he produced by himself. Nevertheless, these last also, in spite of the extravagance of some and the crudity of all and their element of imitation, are proof that the playwright possessed an incisive, nervous, and often original talent which was of service to several of his contemporaries.

4. *Thomas Dekker (1570?–1641).*[1] Although Jonson associated Marston and Dekker in his attacks, they are no less different from each other than they are from him. Both of them did indeed write plays in which all the liberty and also all the licence of the English stage are to be found, but while Marston's habitual cynicism and pessimism connect him with Jonson, there is in Dekker's work a vein of poetry and optimism, a tenderness and charm, which the other two play-

[1] Dramatic works, ed. R. H. Shepherd, 4 vols. (1873); selected plays, ed. Rhys (Mermaid Series, 1894); *Old Fortunatus*, ed. Smeaton (Temple Dramatists, 1906); *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, ed. Sutherland (Oxford, 1928); Jonson's *Poetaster* and Dekker's *Satiromastix*, ed. Penniman (Belles Lettres Series, 1913). Studies by M. L. Hunt (Columbia, 1911) and K. L. Gregg (Washington, 1924).

wrights lack. While Marston and Jonson are, like Chapman, manifestly under the influence of Marlowe with his passionate rhetoric and violent and excessive characterization, Dekker takes us back to Robert Greene, who, in spite of the air of pedantry intermittently imparted to his style by too much mythology, was the one of the earlier dramatists least dis-

prison. Like Greene, he excels at creating gentle, feeling women who are devoted and tender. He had, however, an advantage over Greene in that, when he began to write plays

of service to Dekker.

Nothing is known of him, but it may be suspected that he sprang from the people of London and was irregularly educated. London was often his theme and the citizens were always his public. He wrote for the stage from 1597 onwards, at first as a subordinate. He was several times in prison, once for three years, from 1613 to 1616. From 1638 all trace of him is lost.

Ben Jonson's attacks give glimpses of him. In his person Jonson regarded him as a poor devil, down at heels and out at elbows, a jaundiced vagabond, and in his author's capacity as a 'play-dresser and plagiary,' a complete ignoramus without Greek or Latin, conceited and jealous into the bargain, and willing to do anything for money. His representative on

Jonson's stage is hired in order to insult Horace, who is Jo himself. His foolish inventions are said to be growing a like ill weeds. To this Dekker retorts by an amusing pi of the arrogant Horace-Jonson sweating in travail as he duces an ode and seeks for rhymes.

This poor ignorant wretch, this patcher and piecer, however, certain advantages over Jonson. More than he as much as any one else in this period, he has the gifts of and freshness. No burden of reading weighs him down. habit of analysis cumbers him, and at his best he reproc the animation of life very directly. He dramatizes pe who live and awaken sympathy. On occasion, he has lyrical gift; from time to time he sings a song which is wi light, and exquisite. While he hardly ever makes a u and well-constructed play, while he has little logic an herence and no philosophy whatsoever, he yet stands in age for the dramatic poet who is so by instinct, who is o people and artlessly romantic.

Impecunious as he was, he was all his life obliged to coll rate with any one and every one, with mediocre playwr like Chettle, Haughton, and Day, with the most famou them all—Jonson himself, Middleton, Drayton, and espe Webster—and later with Rowley, Ford, and Massinger. did not often have time to work as an artist and by hin Only some eight or nine plays written by him alone are served and the merit of only four of these is eminent: *Shoemakers Holiday* (1599), *Old Fortunatus* (1600), and two parts of *The Honest Whore* (1604).

This child of London writes especially of London an the cockney people. Others were, we know, painting lively pictures of the city at the same time, but they w in a satirical or derisory spirit. Jonson displays the vice oddities of the town. Beaumont, in *The Knight of the Bu Pestle*, makes fun of the unsophisticated ignorance o citizens and their romantic imagination. Middleton s himself intimately acquainted with the deeds and wa rogues and gallants. But Dekker is, with Thomas Hey almost alone in his sympathy for the world of the craft and the ragtag and bobtail of the streets.

The constant quarrels between the companies of actor the civic authorities must not give the impression that the of the citizens were hostile to the stage. The contrary is of all save the still narrow circle of the devout. The city

whole was stage-struck, to such a point that poets, laureates, and dramatists had arisen to work specially for the citizens, pamper their tastes and vanity, and hold up on the stage a flattering mirror in which they saw their own embellished reflection. Dekker was one of their authors, but he had a natural love for the task which was to others a mere source of profit.

ber [illegible]

ancient tradition when he told the story of Simon Eyre, the glorious shoemaker of the reign of Henry VI, who from a mere apprentice became lord mayor, built the leather-market in Leadenhall, and founded a holiday and banquet for the [illegible]

possessed, the second is a drunken wag and a mischievous scamp. But merriment and heartiness are dominant. Simon Eyre's own jovial temper makes him unique; his very insults sound cordial. His language is emphatic and non- [illegible]

jokes with them, and in his own way loves them He is the king of London apprentices, and celebrates his accession by [illegible]

as Simon Eyre.

Dekker is always in the sun, always enjoying a trivial,

easy-going cheerfulness. He does not trouble to explain Simon Eyre's rise, cares nothing for the real psychological problem. He does not drain his cup, but merely sips its froth.

He heightens the impression of facile happiness by the love-story of the principal plot. Lacy, nephew of the Earl of Lincoln, loves Rose, the lord mayor's daughter. Both earl and mayor oppose the match from pride of class. Lacy then deserts the regiment he commands, letting it go to fight in France without him, and disguised as a Flemish workman he works for Simon Eyre in order to be near his beloved. He ends, of course, by running away with her, and the father and uncle, after holding out for some time, are reconciled by the king.

Dekker's cheerfulness is everywhere, like an atmosphere about the play, like sunlight shed on gutter or dust-heap and making joyous reflections. Even smutty words are bright in this gay light and gather no sinister suggestiveness in the shade. All men are good at heart, prone though they be to sin. Citizen Hammon courts Jane, whose husband, Ralph, a journeyman shoemaker, has been pressed for the French war. He finds her in the seamstress's shop in which she is seeking to earn a livelihood until Ralph comes back. He yearns for her, plans to seduce her, and desires her the more for her resistance. He then repeats to her a false report, in which he seems himself to believe, of her husband's death. In her forlornness, she at last yields to his importunities, and the marriage is about to be celebrated when Ralph returns, limping from a wound, and learns what has happened. With the help of his brother shoemakers he stops the bridal procession, and his young wife then flies to his arms, preferring his poverty to all Hammon's money. For a moment Hammon does not acknowledge himself beaten, but attempts to buy Jane from Ralph. But he is, at bottom, a good fellow, and when Ralph is indignant he cedes both wife and money to him. Every one in this play has a good heart.

A charming rose-coloured vein of feeling runs through it. It is perhaps more genuinely and virtuously merry than anything else in Renascence drama. Romantic and realistic elements are nowhere else so easily and prettily blended. A realism neither hard nor cynical combines well with a romanticism which is not extravagant, exactly as Dekker's very simple blank verse is happily allied to his picturesque

[illegible] His sympathy with his humble folk brings them [illegible]

[illegible] ould say of him that he 'had poetry enough for anything.' This poetry is more evident in a strange and unequal play which has many absurdities but includes some beautiful scenes, *Old Fortunatus*.

Dekker, a popular author who had not lost contact with the spirit of the Middle Ages, wrote a true morality play on an old German legend already staged in England. Old Fortunatus is endowed by Fortune with an inexhaustible purse, which he has chosen to receive rather than wisdom, health, beauty, or long life, and the gift of his choice brings him unhappiness. It causes his death and also that of his two sons, of whom one is virtuous and the other vicious.

The sons' adventures are a tissue of strange buffooneries. But the play opens grandly and poetically. Fortunatus, poor and old, has lost his way in a wood when the dazzling vision comes to him of Fortune with her train of crowned ragamuffins and enslaved kings, the ragamuffins singing her praises and the kings cursing her. With royal disdain Fortune replies to them, enumerating the marks of her power. Then she notices the poor old man and offers him any one of her [illegible]

[illegible] made of harmonious and clear verses, is one of the most poetic in the drama of the period.

The Honest Whore is Dekker's best-known work. In spite of some Elizabethan eccentricity and whimsicality, it might be called a domestic drama. The definition fits at least the [illegible]

[illegible] affronts.

[illegible]

this silent man, so different from the others, but he disdainfully rejects her advances, thinks that her sighs are so many baits to her traps and that her tears for her lost chastity are false. He tells her all the shamefulness of her trade. She is converted, denies herself to her lovers, endures poverty, and dismisses even Matheo, her first seducer, declaring that she can accept nothing but marriage from him. He rejects this demand with a sneer, but is finally compelled to grant it by the Duke of Milan.

The first part of the play ends with this rehabilitation of Bellafront. The second part has truth which is more poignant and of a rarer kind. Matheo, married against his will, is a debauchee and gamester who loses all the money of the household. Determined to 'fly high,' he has no regard for his wife, but robs her of everything, even her dress, which he sells that he may gamble. He makes her live in a hovel of which all the furniture goes to the pawnbroker, steals in order to play again, urges his wife to resume her old trade and brings her customers. She, however, is now completely virtuous; not only does she resist her husband's infamous persuasions, stripping herself the while of everything for his sake, but she even repels the advances of Hippolito, who converted her and whom she loved. He is now married to the beautiful girl he once, in error, had mourned, but he seeks, nevertheless, to seduce Bellafront. His gold, his presents, his eloquence, and his vaunting of the splendour of courtesans are, however, all in vain: in reply she recalls to him his sinister picture of women of ill-fame.

Unknown to her, her father, Orlando Friscobaldo, the most original character in the play, is beside her to sustain her. This old gentleman of strict morals has refused to see his daughter since her fall. She had been dead to him. Learning, however, that she is married and wishes to live virtuously, he enters her house disguised as a servant. While he feigns to be hot-tempered and brutal, he watches over her like a providence. He first gives money to her husband, and then, finding him incorrigible and cruel to her, arranges his arrest for theft and thus has him at his mercy. When he has tamed him he forgives him, and offers his house and money to him and his wife. The struggle between Friscobaldo's sense of honour and his fatherly love is painted with extreme vigour and originality. Without analysis or soliloquies, the old man's vacillations are shown, the sudden alternations of his

fury and his love, his unending care for his daughter and untiring devotion to her, hidden beneath his taunts and his apparently inflexible severity. He resolves himself to test the thoroughness of her conversion, and every time her virtue is proof against a new trial he is unable to contain his joy,

He is the

y dear to

every public, but are especially so to the English. Nowhere else is gruff benevolence so much loved, whether in novels or on the stage, as in England. The English like to think it part of their national character, in contrast to the polite manners of southern nations which hide, as they think, a lack of virtue and cordiality. A good heart and a rough exterior make their ideal.

The Bohemian Dekker had really great gifts. He could impart poetry and life. His work, badly put together, may seem formless beside Jonson's. But Jonson's plays cannot

to be models. They are worthy to rank with Shakespeare's people, from whom, however, they are not copied. In the plays in which Dekker collaborated his poetry and tenderness recur. His handiwork can be recognized in the most pleasing passages of *The Witch of Edmonton*, which he wrote with Ford and Rowley, and of *The Virgin Martyr*, which he wrote with Massinger.

5. *Thomas Heywood* (*1575?–1650*).[1] It is Thomas Heywood whose tenderness and pity bring him nearest to Dekker. Lamb called this pathetic author 'a sort of prose Shakespeare.' He was rather, perhaps, a prose Dekker, a Dekker shorn of

romance, he was, in some of his plays, more successful than the former in realizing the ideal citizen drama.

Like Dekker, Heywood is closely connected with London, and the great body of his work constantly betrays his desire to minister to the tastes and even the vanities and prejudices

[1] Dramatic works, reprint by Pearson, 6 vols. (1874); selected plays, ed. Verity (Mermaid Series, 1888); *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, ed. Ward (1897), ed. Cox (1907), ed. Bates (with *The Fair Maid of the West*, Belles Lettres Series); *The Captives* ed. Judson (Yale, 1921). Studies by O. Cromwell (Yale, 1928) and A. M. Clark (Oxford, 1931).

of the citizens and their guilds. He was well educated, a Cambridge man. His knowledge was extensive and he was a very productive writer who attempted many literary forms and the most various subjects. As early as 1596 he was a resolute devotee of the stage, and, like Shakespeare, he was both an actor and a playwright. He was the most prolific of the Elizabethans. He claims to have been the chief author of two hundred and twenty plays, of which only twenty-four have reached us. Of all English dramatists, he was the one who came nearest to the fertility of the Spaniards. Quantity is often reached at the expense of quality. This copious writer is an improviser never stayed by artistic considerations. At his best, he attains to clarity and fluency, and he desires no more.

His subjects are extremely varied. He draws on English history, ready to flatter the simple and artless patriotism or the Protestantism of his public. He appeals to their sense of honour and of morality. The better to reach his ends, he usually confined himself to England, rejecting the fashion of the exotic which attracted writers to the south, and especially to Italy.

Among his plays intended to flatter the self-satisfaction of the Londoners, the most extravagant is unquestionably *The Four Prentices of London*, which was performed towards the end of the sixteenth century. More than any other play, it panders to the vanity of the citizens. Their reading of degenerate chivalrous romances so easily went to their heads, that there was hardly an apprentice among them who did not conceal a Don Quixote. Heywood represents four youths, sons of the expropriated Earl of Bulloigne (or Bouillon), who has taken refuge in London. They have been apprenticed to a mercer, a haberdasher, a goldsmith, and a grocer, and do their duty well until their blood is stirred by an appeal in the streets for soldiers who will go to Jerusalem. They thereupon enrol themselves, and each of them subsequently encounters adventures extraordinary enough to dim the glory of Amadis. At last the brothers meet in Jerusalem. Each of them has won a crown, but Godfrey, out of humility, asks that his may be of thorns.

The adulation of the city is unbounded. Each exploit of any one of the apprentices is credited to his guild, which he never forgets. On his shield each bears the emblem of his trade. Heywood dedicated the printed edition of his play

[illegible]

There is the same flattery in his less romantic plays, for instance in the two parts of *King Edward the Fourth*, which show the siege of London and the defeat of the besiegers by the lord mayor and citizens. *If You Know Not Me, You Know No Body, or the Troubles of Queen Elizabeth*, celebrates [illegible]

of the West sounds a patriotic note in a wider atmosphere. Heywood celebrates in it the adventures of seafarers, and very vigorously reproduces life in the port of Plymouth at the time of the expedition of Essex to the Azores.

Already in these plays Heywood plainly shows his preference for dramas having a moral tendency and dealing with [illegible]

series of plays which show Heywood's powers in their pure state, hardly [illegible] ambitions. [illegible] in 1587 with [illegible] be traced through works lost save for their titles, and through a few still extant.

This was a series of domestic dramas. One of the most [illegible] representation of a crime of passion analogous to *Arden of Feversham*, and insists on the punishment and remorse of the guilty lovers. A dumb show precedes each act and indicates the relation of this play to the old moralities.

The *Yorkshire Tragedy*, which was published in 1608 as a work of Shakespeare's, has a more modern aspect. It is very short, and powerfully epitomizes the crimes committed by a

debauchee who has come home in a state of frenzy aft losing all his fortune at play. He knows that his wife ruined, that his children must be beggars, and in a fever turns to indiscriminate slaughter. The play moves violent and furiously; the dialogue is breathless and spasmodic; t murderer is like one possessed. Beside himself with remor for having rendered his wife destitute, he overwhelms her wi ignoble insults and blames her for all their misfortunes. Y we feel that he loves his children even as he strangles the He is a madman impelled by a diabolic force who strikes rig and left—wife, children and servants. Arrested and plac in the presence of the wife he has wounded, he recovers l senses. Literally, he feels that a devil has gone out of hi and liberated, exorcized, and repentant, he goes out to l punishment.

These are such realistic plays as convict sinners among audience and compel them to confession. They are the mo moral and, in one sense, the most classical contribution of t Elizabethans to drama. They respect the essential unit that of subject. They go straight to the point, rapidly ai luminously. Nothing else is so unencumbered, has a gait unaffected, reaches its conclusions so unmistakably.

Heywood's finest and most characteristic work belongs this school of domestic drama, but in his gentler vein he avoi crime, and does not present adultery save as a tragedy whi inflicts suffering and provokes remorse. He abstains fro bloodshed unless a well-known theme constrains him to it, f instance that of *The Rape of Lucrece* printed in 1609. This an unequal play which very forcefully depicts the terror Lucretia's house after her rape.

His masterpiece is *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, pe formed in 1603. Nothing in Elizabethan drama is simpler matter and form, or more moving than this play. It h indeed two distinct and badly connected plots, but only o of them, that which names it, is important.

A happy and virtuous married couple, whose felicity co municates itself to the audience, are first presented. B their home is ruined by the generosity of the husband, Mast Frankeford, who gives shelter to a poor gentleman nam Wendoll, and bestows his confidence on him. Wendoll co ceives a fatal love for Frankeford's wife, and although is aware of the vileness of his passion, he struggles against in vain. When, during Frankeford's absence, he is left alo

with his hostess, he avows his feelings, and the young woman, who is at first horrified and stupefied, is presently under the sway of his passion, able to overcome gratitude and honour. She wavers, then succumbs: it is as though she were seized by sudden giddiness and could not do otherwise than fall. A faithful servant informs the master of the house of what has happened. At first he is incredulous, tries to banish his suspicions, plays at cards with his friend and his wife. But, strive against it as he may, he finds himself twisting everything they say and reading double meanings into all their words. Feeling that he must have certainty, he alleges that he is obliged to make a journey, and starts at night, in spite of the protests of his wife, who would stop his going, and of his friend, who offers to accompany and protect him. He returns suddenly to find the guilty couple in each other's arms. Nothing is more poignant than this return:

> Astonishment,
> Feare and amazement beat upon my heart,
> Even as a madman beats upon a drum,

he says, as he approaches the room where the lovers are asleep, and when he reappears, after witnessing their guilt, he is as much ravaged by emotion as Macbeth issuing from Duncan's chamber. Yet he has not killed them, for he will not send two precious souls to hell. With withering contempt he turns his false friend out of his house, and when his wife, on her knees, weeps and implores for mercy, he forces her to acknowledge the enormity of her fault and shows her their two children:

> On whose white brows thy shame is charactered.

He then pronounces her sentence. He will punish her only with kindness. She must retire, with all her possessions, leaving nothing behind her, to a manor he gives up to her. She shall have money and servants, but she must never attempt to see him or her children again, nor ever write to him. She has died to him.

She goes, forgetting the lute on which she has been wont [illegible]

ness of her unhappiness for which he is responsible. She asks the messenger to tell her husband that he has found her in tears, longing for death, and that she has sworn neither to

debauchee who has come home in a state of frenzy afte losing all his fortune at play. He knows that his wife is ruined, that his children must be beggars, and in a fever he turns to indiscriminate slaughter. The play moves violently and furiously; the dialogue is breathless and spasmodic; the murderer is like one possessed. Beside himself with remorse for having rendered his wife destitute, he overwhelms her with ignoble insults and blames her for all their misfortunes. Yet we feel that he loves his children even as he strangles them. He is a madman impelled by a diabolic force who strikes right and left—wife, children and servants. Arrested and placed in the presence of the wife he has wounded, he recovers his senses. Literally, he feels that a devil has gone out of him, and liberated, exorcized, and repentant, he goes out to his punishment.

These are such realistic plays as convict sinners among an audience and compel them to confession. They are the most moral and, in one sense, the most classical contribution of the Elizabethans to drama. They respect the essential unity, that of subject. They go straight to the point, rapidly and luminously. Nothing else is so unencumbered, has a gait so unaffected, reaches its conclusions so unmistakably.

Heywood's finest and most characteristic work belongs to this school of domestic drama, but in his gentler vein he avoids crime, and does not present adultery save as a tragedy which inflicts suffering and provokes remorse. He abstains from bloodshed unless a well-known theme constrains him to it, for instance that of *The Rape of Lucrece* printed in 1609. This is an unequal play which very forcefully depicts the terror in Lucretia's house after her rape.

His masterpiece is *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, performed in 1603. Nothing in Elizabethan drama is simpler in matter and form, or more moving than this play. It has indeed two distinct and badly connected plots, but only one of them, that which names it, is important.

A happy and virtuous married couple, whose felicity communicates itself to the audience, are first presented. But their home is ruined by the generosity of the husband, Master Frankeford, who gives shelter to a poor gentleman named Wendoll, and bestows his confidence on him. Wendoll conceives a fatal love for Frankeford's wife, and although he is aware of the vileness of his passion, he struggles against it in vain. When, during Frankeford's absence, he is left alone

[illegible]

She wavers, then succumbs: it is as though she were seized by sudden giddiness and could not do otherwise than fall. A faithful servant informs the master of the house of what has happened. At first he is incredulous, tries to banish his suspicions, plays at cards with his friend and his wife. But, strive against it as he may, he finds himself twisting everything they say and reading double meanings into all their words. Feeling that he must have certainty, he alleges that he is obliged to make a journey, and starts at night, in spite of the protests of his wife, who would stop his going, and of his friend, who offers to accompany and protect him. He returns suddenly to find the guilty couple in each other's arms. Nothing is more poignant than this return:

> Astonishment,
> Feare and amazement beat upon my heart,
> Even as a madman beats upon a drum,

he says, as he approaches the room where the lovers are asleep, and when he reappears, after witnessing their guilt, he is as much ravaged by emotion as Macbeth issuing from Duncan's chamber. Yet he has not killed them, for he will not send two precious souls to hell. With withering contempt he turns his false friend out of his house, and when his wife, on her knees, weeps and implores for mercy, he forces her to acknowledge the enormity of her fault and shows her their two children:

> On whose white brows thy shame is charactered

He then pronounces her sentence. He will punish her only with kindness. She must retire, with all her possessions, leaving nothing behind her, to a manor he gives up to her. She shall have money and servants, but she must never attempt to see him or her children again, nor ever write to him. She has died to him.

She goes, forgetting the lute on which she has been wont [illegible] ness of her unhappiness for which he is responsible. She asks the messenger to tell her husband that he has found her in tears, longing for death, and that she has sworn neither to

eat nor drink. The lute is, by her order, broken against the coach-wheels:

As the last music that I e'er shall make.

When Wendoll comes out of his hiding-place to speak to her, she screams in terror. Her lover has become for her a demon whom from she flees in horror, and Wendoll feels himself a Cain, a wanderer on the face of the earth.

Mistress Frankeford is next discovered in her place of exile and resigned to death. Her sole remaining desire is to see her husband before her life ends, and he has pity on her, reaches her in her last moments, and solemnly grants her his pardon sealed by a kiss.

Moral loftiness and poignant melancholy permeate this play. The unfaithful wife who is torn by remorse in the very act of sinning has nothing in common with Alice, the murderess of Feversham. Wendoll, save for a final, regrettable and superfluous touch, is entirely other than the vile Mosbie. If Heywood makes his heroine fall with a suddenness which is improbable, he succeeds in conveying the fearful fascination of passion. Above all, he depicts, with a humane sympathy then exceptional, the wife's remorse and the pity of the husband, whose love subsists although his moral dignity allows him no base compromise. Customs have so changed that his kindness may to-day seem like pitiless severity. But Frankeford was Othello's contemporary; the stage he walked was one on which terrible vengeances, after the Italians, were frequent. When his time and the circumstances in which he was created are taken into account, he is seen to breathe a singular gentleness which was victorious over violent and ferocious instincts.

Nearly thirty years later, Heywood returned to the theme of pity and pardon in a less celebrated and less pathetic play, but one which is perhaps more modern and which shows great delicacy of feeling, *The English Traveller*, printed in 1633. The hero, young Geraldine, is certainly among those who won for Heywood the praise that 'his gentlemen are the most refined and finished of gentlemen.' He is a candid youth who does not know that Platonic love may be dangerous to himself and others, and who suspects no treachery in the woman he loves or in his friend. He is in love with a girl who reciprocates his feeling, but on returning from a long journey on the Continent he finds her the wife of Wincott, an old

ntleman. Wincott makes friends with him and encourages s visits. Geraldine and Mistress Wincott confess to each her that their love subsists, yet do not fail in their duty, it agree to unite after Wincott's death. Meanwhile, how-ver, Geraldine introduces to the Wincotts' house his friend alavill, who wins Mistress Wincott's love while he pretends iat he is courting her sister. He becomes her lover and gether with her mocks Geraldine's coldness. When an cident reveals to Geraldine that he has been doubly be-ayed, his first thought is to kill the guilty pair, but he coils from bloodshed and will not send them to damnation. e decides on another journey, and when Mistress Wincott, it of prudence, feigns regret at his departure, and reminds *m of their vows, he tells her what he knows and blasts her* ith his contempt. Her eyes are thus opened to the enormity her crime. She dismisses her lover in horror and dies iddenly, leaving behind her a letter in which she acknow-dges her fault and declares her admiration for the man whose oral greatness has saved her soul by causing her to feel morse.

These plays are the most characteristic and the finest roductions of a playwright whose work is rich, diversified, id extremely unequal; but who has created, here and there, me strong and simple situations appealing to feelings shared y us all. Amid the violence and ferocity habitual to the age of the time, these scenes are restful. Heywood had a [illegible] hich was so informed by pity [illegible] with the rigidity of extreme [illegible] good for all countries and l ages.

6. *Thomas Middleton* (*1570?-1627*).—Thomas Middleton,[1] ironologer of the city and more than once in charge of civic iasques and pageants, had as strong ties with London as ekker and Heywood, and depicted, as they did, the life of ie town. Instead, however, of flattering the citizens, he was iverted by them. It pleased him to show up their foibles id their vices. He thus connects with the Jonson who wrote *he Alchemist*, *The Silent Woman*, and *Bartholomew Fair*, with ie difference that he seems less anxious than Jonson to point

[1] *The Works of Thomas Middleton*, ed. Bullen, 8 vols. (188[illegible]), selected [illegible]

a moral. He has a taste for cynical pictures and a nat tendency towards the most licentious implications, althc as a rule he abstains from the more brutal obscenity of s as Marston.

Hardly anything is known of him save that Jonson c sidered him 'a base fellow,' whether as a man or as a wı does not appear. In 1604 he wrote some satirical tales of life in London, after the manner of Greene and Nashe. T form a parallel to Dekker's efforts in the same direction, are entitled *The Black Book* and *Father Hubbard's T* Incisive, picturesque and moving rapidly, they show a v complete acquaintance with the disreputable society in wl the scene of the author's comedies was also laid. *The B Book* is the more cynical of the two collections, the o being more poetic, its mood softened by a pity for the w and poor of the world which recalls Dekker.

(*a*) Middleton's Comedies.—Middleton tried several pa before he found his right one, attempting romantic plays *Blurt, Master Constable*, very strongly influenced by Sha speare, and pseudo-historical plays, for instance *The Ma of Queenborough* which deals with the Saxon invasion. collaborated with several authors, principally Dekker, finally he found his vocation in light comedy. He him alludes, in a prefatory address to the readers of *The Roa Girl*, to a change in the public taste analogous to that wl affected dress. 'Now, in the time of spruceness, our p follow the niceness of our garments.' It is not certain that general taste had changed as much as Middleton asserts, what he says doubtless applies to the special public for wl he wrote, 'the termers,' gay young sparks who flocked town in the autumn. He might have been the purveyo some London Palais-Royal theatre of the reign of James

He produced from 1604 to 1612 a series of highly flavou farcical comedies, distinguished by the vivacity of their sce their skilful construction, and the very close acquaintance t show with the least desirable circles of London society. best of them are *Michaelmas Term* (1604), *A Trick to c the Old One* (1606?), *A Mad World, My Masters* (16 *Your Five Gallants* (1606), and *A Chaste Maid in Cheap* (1612).

The first of these, *Michaelmas Term*, is in its own *genre* far removed from a masterpiece. Its spirit is that of 'conny-catching' tracts. It shows a young man from

country drawn into a life of pleasure, induced by sharpers to gamble and spend money and brought by need of cash into the clutchers of a usurer who finally seizes his estate. Quomodo, the usurer, is a draper, and has two attendants who help him to ensnare Easy, the dupe. A forerunner of Harpagon, he dispenses no money, but sells his cloth to poor Easy, who cannot get rid of it except at a third of the price he gave for it, to a purchaser who is in fact Quomodo himself. Easy cannot honour the bond he has signed and has to pledge his property. This theme is treated by Middleton with all possible accuracy. [illegible]
assume disguises, [illegible]
cheating scenes. [illegible]
unsophisticated, meets disaster by a mathematical necessity; his ruin is inevitably deduced. Shakespeare himself was not more skilful when he showed how Iago duped Othello. In the borrowing scene, long as it is, there is not a detail which does not tell, and the basis is a very sure and very accurate psychology. The *genre* is not elevated, but, such as it is, it reaches perfection in this play.

All Middleton's other comedies are worth analysing. They include examples of complete cynicism like *A Trick to catch the Old One*, a merry farce in Regnard's manner, in which Middleton claims sympathy for an extravagant nephew who makes his rapacious uncle his dupe. In *A Mad World, My Masters*, a bully plays abominable tricks on his grandfather, whose heir he is, but who will give him nothing. In the end the laugh turns against [illegible]
victim of his own misdeeds. [illegible]
moralities, for instance in [illegible]
swindlers and ruffians in [illegible]
chastisement to them. The five types represented are 'the broker gallant,' 'the bawd gallant,' 'the cheating gallant,' [illegible]

simpleton of a student, who ends by marrying a red-haired

Welshwoman of easy virtue. These situations lead wildly farcical incidents, through which runs the course of t true love of yet another couple who succeed in getting marri in spite of their parents. When we read this comedy we ha to acknowledge that no writer of vaudeville at the present d has more skill or adroitness than Middleton, the most mode of the humorists of the Renascence.

To all his comedies, including the last, his observation realities gives substance. He paints the manners of his tim In *A Chaste Maid* there is a scene which sketches a christenin party from the life. We meet at this junketing all the gossi of the neighbourhood, and certain Puritans who find mo pious pretexts for drinking deep. One character in *A M World* is more than farcical, a true portrait, probably draw from life—the grandfather, Sir Bounteous Progress, a rich o knight who practises in his country house the most liber hospitality. He has an artless respect for titles, and is nev happier than when he shelters or believes he shelters a lo beneath his roof. At the same time he is cheerful and sociab addicted to the pleasures of the table and still a follower women. He entertains at great expense a London courtes who deceives him barefacedly. He no sooner learns that s has taken to her bed than he concludes that she is about to be him a son, and is beside himself with pride at the vitality still retains. This little spare old man in his long doublet full of go and optimism. The play subjects him to trial aft trial, but his good humour is never defeated. Were he n so void of sentimentality, he might be one of Dekker characters.

Middleton, however, was not so complete a realist as to ha no share of Elizabethan fancifulness. Even Quomodo, t crafty usurer of *Michaelmas Term*, has in his composition grain of pleasant imagination, almost of poetry. He genuinely carried away by the thought of the property out which he cheats poor Easy. He sees himself riding thith with his wife and children, harvests his crops in imaginatio For all his rapacity, he has a quite idyllic vision of felicity a a heart which melts like that of any worthy citizen and go father. It is true that when once this fancifulness is let loo it outruns all bounds. Quomodo, wishing to know how h son Sim will behave as owner of the land gained by his father craft, and how Thomasine, his wife, will weep when he is more, feigns to grow ill and die. He has cause to rue h

evice, for Thomasine's pity for her husband's poor dupe has urned to love, and she immediately marries Easy, reveals to im the treachery which has victimized him, and helps him to

ull earth.

(*b*) THE TRAGEDY MIDDLETON WROTE ALONE.—His comdies are only half Middleton's work. It is strange to see him urning, at the height of his success, from the kind of work which had so well repaid him and attempting tragedy. Toay opinion inclines to attribute to 1612 the only tragedy which he wrote without a collaborator: *Women beware Women.* t dramatizes the true adventures of an Italian courtesan, Bianca Cappello (1542-87), and may have been suggested by he success recently encountered by *The White Devil*, a play n the life of another Italian courtesan, Vittoria Accorombona, *written by Webster, with whom Middleton seems to have* een on terms of friendship. Vice and crime are portrayed

ossible.

The beginning of his play is truly admirable. It is pervaded by a gentle atmosphere of honest worth and love, so that he subsequent abominations are proportionately thrown into elief. Leontio, a young factor, brings home to his poor dwelling in Florence, his Venetian bride, who is both marvellously beautiful and nobly born. It has been a love-match, and Bianca accepts her humble lot cheerfully. Leontio's mother, when once she has scolded her son for having kept his marriage secret, receives his young wife affectionately. But Leontio is obliged to leave home almost immediately.

with a last farewell. Bianca, on her balcony, weeps while her mother-in-law mildly reproaches her. Leontio has hardly

Shakespeare, wrote almost always in collaboration, so that his own talent is difficult to distinguish. He left, however, of his [illegible]

[illegible] theatre and a sense of tragic and comic stage-effects which made a wide appeal. Middleton, an expert in comic dialogue, gives in his one tragedy too much space to lyrical soliloquies and tirades. Rowley's influence is presumably accountable for the more lively dialogue of the later plays and also, doubtless, for the unfortunately numerous farcical effects in such parts of them as are comedy. But it is impossible to do more than conjecture the contribution of either playwright to these undivided plays which they both signed—Middleton's name [illegible]

[illegible] names it, is reminiscent of *Hamlet*; it is a *Hamlet* transposed to a lower rank of society. Young Captain Ager is, in the course of a quarrel, called the son of a whore by his colonel, a brave but violent-tempered man whom he has greatly admired. He is angry on behalf of his mother and a duel seems inevitable, but Ager cannot fight save in a just cause. [illegible]

[illegible] death, acknowledges that he has been in the wrong and withdraws the insult to the young man's mother, confessing that he uttered it in a moment of temper.

Although Lady Ager's change of attitude is very sudden, the scene between her and her son is really dramatic, its course guided by a very sure hand.

The plot of *The Spanish Gipsy*, a more fantastic and less serious tragi-comedy, is much more complicated. The self-styled gipsy is a great Spanish nobleman who is obliged, after killing another nobleman in a duel, to flee his country. He returns thither with his wife, children and some followers, all disguised as gipsies, idyllic gipsies who constitute a free society, having its own laws and customs. From this Utopian gipsy state all vice is banished: no man cheats or steals or is dissipated. Otherwise these are like true gipsies, who tell fortunes, sing, even act plays. Many suitors are attracted by the beauty of the chief's daughter, Pretiosa. The spirit of the pastoral reigns in this part of the play.

The tragedy is found in another plot which has some really moving scenes. Young Roderigo, son of the corregidor of Madrid, abducts a pretty girl, with the help of his friends, one night when he is heated with wine, takes her to his room and violates her. At dawn on the morrow, the victim—Clara, daughter of Don Pedro—is horrified when she awakes in the place of the crime, in unknown surroundings. She perceives through the window a large garden with an alabaster fountain in its centre. She returns home, determined to discover her seducer, and refuses to marry a young man she loves because she can contemplate no reparation except marriage with her ravisher. Long afterwards she is hurt in a street accident and carried to a neighbouring house. When she recovers consciousness, she finds herself again in the scene of the crime. Her father, who is tending her, looks through the window, at her request, and describes to her the beautiful garden she has seen already with its alabaster fountain. Thus recognition is accomplished, and the heroine finally marries her ravisher, who ever since the fatal night has been consumed by remorse and has wished to repair his wrong to her. These incidents might be melodramatic, but Middleton's habitual realism gives them a striking air of truth.

Incontestably, however, the masterpiece of the collaboration of Middleton and Rowley is *The Changeling*, which would rank with the Shakespearian tragedies were it not disfigured by a coarse and worthless secondary plot, without connection with the principal story.

The hand of the youthful Beatrice, daughter of the governor of the castle of Alicante, is officially granted to the Lord Alonso. But the Lord Alsemero arrives and falls in love

with Beatrice, believing her free. She returns his love and they exchange vows. This *opening of the play moves swiftly* and is charming. Beatrice vainly implores for a postponement of the marriage her father has arranged for her. He

dacious, mean and forceful. She has repelled him with sarcasm and insults. She feels for him invincible loathing, as for a reptile, combined with secret horror, but he refuses to be discouraged and is ready to do anything to win a smile from her.

Since no coldness from Beatrice discourages Alonso, Alsemero conceives the idea of preventing his marriage with Beatrice by provoking him to a duel. But Beatrice, trembling for the life of the man she loves, determines that De Flores, who will do her bidding at a word, shall save her. She therefore flatters him and gives him to understand that she wishes Alonso to disappear. She plans to pay her tool with much gold, which will enable him to escape after the murder, but he, the while, has no prize in view save herself.

The crime is accomplished, and De Flores returns to Beatrice to claim not the reward she intends, but that which he desires. He rejects her proffered gold although she doubles and trebles its sum. Their shared crime puts her in his power, and finally, like a hawk with its prey, he carries her off with him:

'Las! how the turtle pants!

These incomparable scenes are followed by others which are unfortunately inferior, some of them extremely licentious. They show that De Flores remains true to himself. Beatrice does indeed marry Alsemero, for whose sake she has become

but, rather than fall into the hands of justice alive, De Flores stabs first Beatrice and then himself:

> Yes, and her honour's prize
> Was my reward; I thank life for nothing
> But that pleasure: it was so sweet to me,
> That I have drunk up all, left none behind
> For any man to pledge me.

These terrible adventures are recounted and these criminal passions and horrifying characters are drawn restrainedly, briefly, rapidly, and dramatically, and not oratorically. There is no regularity in the breathless, disjointed verse, but it is nervous and full of movement.

(*d*) MIDDLETON'S LAST PLAYS.—Yet other plays, famous for different reasons, were writen by Middleton by himself: *The Witch* (before 1622) and *A Game at Chess* (1624).

The Witch owes its renown less to its own merit than to its resemblance to *Macbeth.* When, in 1623, *Macbeth* was first published, it seems to have included several passages borrowed from *The Witch* by actors desirous of rejuvenating a play then already old. But Middleton had taken much more from Shakespeare than he gave to him. His witches descend from Macbeth's weird sisters, although they are almost comically realistic. They belong to a play founded on a legend of Alboin, king of the Lombards, properly a story of atrocities, but one which is not here treated seriously.

A Game at Chess is a curious political allegory directed against Spain. Because of its allusions it was astonishingly successful. No other play in Renascence drama was so profitable. The subject is the attempt of Spain, ultimately directed by Ignatius Loyola, to lay hands on England. Played immediately after the rupture of the negotiations for the Spanish match, the projected marriage between Prince Charles and an infanta of Spain, it assigns a shady part to the Spanish ambassador, and the playwright was obliged to go into hiding in order to escape the consequences of his daring. The value of the play is mainly topical, but it is also no less ingenious than audacious. The characters are the chessmen, the white pieces being the English and the black the Spaniards. Middleton's skill, already frequently demonstrated on the stage, is again made manifest.

It is only because he had no high ambition that he is not in the first rank of writers. Although not without literary conscience, he had neither Fletcher's poetry nor the artistic

scrupulosity of Webster. Nor had he the humanity of Heywood and Dekker. The tone of his tragedies, as of his comedies, is generally hard and dry. But in his power to convey the impression of reality he surpasses them all. While he is far from excluding the romantic from his work, his distinction is that he can make the strangest incidents familiar. The moral intention of his plays, especially of his comedies, often suffers by unclean double meanings and implications. Yet it exists: he is undubitably a satirist and to flatter vice is not his habit. His villains are usually punished as they deserve, and as a rule he neither disturbs not goes counter to the conception of justice. However much it may be necessary to qualify praise of Middleton's considerable body of work, he remains a definitely original member of the great [illegible] probable situations are convincing because he could impart an appearance of truth. Middleton neither gave sympathy freely not could attract it in any great degree. But his work [illegible]

[illegible] speare was abandoning [illegible]

Cyril Tourneur, who [illegible] behind him two sombr[illegible] printed in 1607, and *The Atheist's Tragedy*, in 1611.

The first and by far the more powerful of these is like a gloomy morality play in an Italian dress. In an unspecified town in Italy, having a court at which debauchery and cruelty reign, there are an infamous duke and duchess and their appropriately named offspring—Lussurioso, their son, Spurio, the duke's bastard, and Ambitiosio and Supervacuo, the duchess's sons by a former marriage.

Vindice, or the Avenger, whose betrothed the duke has first tried vainly to [illegible] punish this mc[illegible] as it was that [illegible] than one chara[illegible] of course in disguise, and is commissioned by him to corrupt

[1] Works ed. Allardyce Nicoll (1930); *The Best Plays of Webster and Tourneur*, ed. J. Addington Symonds (Mermaid Series, 1888).

but, rather than fall into the hands of justice alive, De Flores stabs first Beatrice and then himself:

> Yes, and her honour's prize
> Was my reward; I thank life for nothing
> But that pleasure: it was so sweet to me,
> That I have drunk up all, left none behind
> For any man to pledge me.

These terrible adventures are recounted and these criminal passions and horrifying characters are drawn restrainedly, briefly, rapidly, and dramatically, and not oratorically. There is no regularity in the breathless, disjointed verse, but it is nervous and full of movement.

(*d*) MIDDLETON'S LAST PLAYS.—Yet other plays, famous for different reasons, were writen by Middleton by himself: *The Witch* (before 1622) and *A Game at Chess* (1624).

The Witch owes its renown less to its own merit than to its resemblance to *Macbeth*. When, in 1623, *Macbeth* was first published, it seems to have included several passages borrowed from *The Witch* by actors desirous of rejuvenating a play then already old. But Middleton had taken much more from Shakespeare than he gave to him. His witches descend from Macbeth's weird sisters, although they are almost comically realistic. They belong to a play founded on a legend of Alboin, king of the Lombards, properly a story of atrocities, but one which is not here treated seriously.

A Game at Chess is a curious political allegory directed against Spain. Because of its allusions it was astonishingly successful. No other play in Renascence drama was so profitable. The subject is the attempt of Spain, ultimately directed by Ignatius Loyola, to lay hands on England. Played immediately after the rupture of the negotiations for the Spanish match, the projected marriage between Prince Charles and an infanta of Spain, it assigns a shady part to the Spanish ambassador, and the playwright was obliged to go into hiding in order to escape the consequences of his daring. The value of the play is mainly topical, but it is also no less ingenious than audacious. The characters are the chessmen, the white pieces being the English and the black the Spaniards. Middleton's skill, already frequently demonstrated on the stage, is again made manifest.

It is only because he had no high ambition that he is not in the first rank of writers. Although not without literary conscience, he had neither Fletcher's poetry nor the artistic

scrupulosity of Webster. Nor had he the humanity of Heywood and Dekker. The tone of his tragedies, as of his comedies, is generally hard and dry. But in his power to

often suffers by unclean double meanings and implications. Yet it exists: he is undubitably a satirist and to flatter vice is not his habit. His villains are usually punished as they deserve, and as a rule he neither disturbs not goes counter to the conception of justice. However much it may be necessary to qualify praise of Middleton's considerable body of work, he remains a definitely original member of the great company of the dramatists of his time, whether we consider his comedies, in which he excels by his amused observation of contemporary rascality, or his tragedies, in which even improbable situations are convincing because he could impart an appearance of truth. Middleton neither gave sympathy freely not could attract it in any great degree. But his work

ems, left
Tragedy,

is like a gloomy morality play in an Italian dress. In an unspecified town in Italy, having a court at which debauchery and cruelty reign, there are an infamous duke and duchess and their appropriately named offspring—Lussurioso, their son, Spurio, the duke's bastard, and Ambitiosio and Supervacuo, the duchess's sons by a former marriage.

Vindice, or the Avenger, whose betrothed the duke has first

[1] Works ed. Allardyce Nicoll (1930); *The Best Plays of Webster and Tourneur*, ed. J. Addington Symonds (Mermaid Series, 1888).

himself to feel. He is all admiration for this woman's beauty, the energy of her ambition, and the presence of mind with which she faces desperate situations. As the wife of a poor gentleman, she is courted by Brachiano, Duke of Padua, and she convinces him that he must marry her, first ridding her of her husband and himself of his virtuous wife. The double murder is accomplished, but suspicion rests on those who profit by it. Vittoria is summoned before an imposing court, over which the Duke of Florence and his brother, Cardinal Monticelso, afterwards Sixtus V, preside. Accusations, precise and overwhelming, are heaped upon her, but she meets her judges superbly, and with head held high turns their attack against them, reducing their proofs to nothingness and causing more than one of those present to waver. This scene on a large scale is admirable. Vittoria is none the less condemned to seclusion in a house of convertites, but escapes from it with her lover's help. They are pursued by the vengeance of the Duke of Florence and killed one after the other, Vittoria holding out until she has exhausted every resource of invention, cunning, and courage. Even in her last hour she defends herself haughtily and, counting on the effect of her beauty, bares her bosom and walks to meet her assassins. She dies at last, confronting Fate with her last words:

My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven, I know not whither.

Beside her is her brother Flamineo, her tool, who has debauched her to advance his fortunes and whom she uses for her love-affairs. It is he who causes her unwanted husband to disappear. He is vice incarnate, but his intrepidity in ill-doing, his lucid intelligence, and his moments of real valour make him, abject as he is, not altogether mean.

These characters are placed among many others and meet with singularly atrocious adventures. The melodramatic expedients, increasingly employed in every succeeding scene, are endless: Brachiano's wife dies because her husband's portrait, which she has the habit of kissing every evening, is poisoned: a magician causes Brachiano to witness the execution of the double crime he has ordered; the sister who has been slain appears unmistakably to the brother who mourns her and will avenge her; Brachiano's murder is accomplished by pouring poison into a helmet afterwards riveted on to his head by an armourer, and he dies in atrocious pain while his

enemies, disguised as Capuchins, reveal themselves to him in his last moments, telling the tale of his crimes and promising him damnation. The play is, moreover, spectacularly [illegible]

[illegible] the new pope appears in great ceremony, uttering a Latin formula. Never has there been a more perfect fusion of pure drama, which is an effect of representing character and passions, and melodrama, which is based on the horror of physical impressions and on spectacular strangeness.

The Duchess of Malfi, a more closely knit play, makes the [illegible] ant on [illegible] tion of [illegible] *lie*, by [illegible] blind, [illegible] at a [illegible] sire to get possession of their victim's fortune. The victim, the Duchess of Malfi (or Amalfi), is all goodness and innocence, and is driven to madness and death by her brothers because she has secretly married her steward, the virtuous Antonio.

The tragedy is full of Shakespearian reminiscences: the duchess recalls Desdemona, and Cariola, her woman, Emilia in *Othello*. Bosola, the monster, the tool of the two brothers, is modelled on Iago. The anger of Ferdinand, the criminal brother, against Bosola, after the murder he himself has ordered, is like that of King John against Hubert when he believes him to have put Arthur to death. The remorse of the other brother, the cardinal who can no longer pray, is a [illegible]

[illegible] fear of her brothers to keep her marriage secret, is discovered in her chamber conversing with her husband, Antonio, her heart filled with joy and love. Antonio leaves her without her knowledge; she continues to speak, thinking he hears her, but her listener is now one of the brothers she fears, to whom

simultaneous association of Middleton and Rowley and of Fletcher and Beaumont which made something like a regular institution of collaboration. No one, however, not Middleton himself, collaborated so constantly as Fletcher.

(*a*) FLETCHER'S COLLABORATION WITH BEAUMONT.—About 1706, when he was twenty-eight years old, Fletcher associated himself with Francis Beaumont (1584–1616), then twenty-three years old. Like himself, a man of good family, Beaumont was the son of a judge and the younger brother of Sir John Beaumont, a distinguished religious poet of the Puritan party. Francis went to Oxford and subsequently read law in London. He was the friend of Drayton and Jonson and a frequenter of the 'Mermaid,' the famous literary tavern. He and Fletcher lived together near the Globe Playhouse, sharing everything, until Beaumont married in 1613. He died soon afterwards, in 1616.

The two friends worked side by side, yet sometimes wrote separate plays: thus Beaumont in 1607 produced, by himself, his mock-h[illegible] *[illegible] Woman-Hater*, and Fletcher, in 1610, his [illegible] a pastoral which is imitated from Guarini's *Pastor Fido* and contains charming passages in which the poet gives scope to his lyrical talent.

Mainly, however, they collaborated, producing together the [illegible]ellent domestic comedy *The Scornful Lady* (1610); *The* [illegible]*ght of the Burning Pestle*, most nimble and amusing of [illegible]rodies, the tragi-comedy *Philaster* (1609), and two pure tragedies, *The Maid's Tragedy* and *A King and No King* (1611).

All these plays show a surprising knowledge of the stage. Reasons of style and versification have led recent critics to attribute their best parts to Beaumont, a conclusion supported by Fletcher's failure to produce anything as remarkable in later years. However this may be, some of these works must be studied at some length, for they mark both the apotheosis of dramatic skill and the beginning of the decline.

The flexibility and what may be called the modernism of the drama of the period cannot be thoroughly understood without knowledge of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Partly a burlesque or parody, this is a play hard to define, to which many diverse elements have contributed, all blended so as to prove the dexterity of the authors and produce a very curious and very merry comedy, alive although it lacks depth, which might, in many respects, have been written yesterday. It has analogies with the 'revues' which make

The king has made Evadne his mistress, and to cloak his relations with her marries her with all solemnity to the honourable but weak Amintor, who knows nothing of the royal amours and who repudiates Aspasia, his betrothed, for the sake of this marriage. On the night of the wedding, ... e will be her husband only in ... over. Evadne's brother, the ... the wars and perceives the melancholy which Amintor, his intimate friend, fails to conceal beneath an appearance of cheerfulness. He persuades

proud woman, even threatening her with his dagger, makes her see the enormity of her fault, and inspires her with the determination to slay her lover. She fulfils her promise, binds the king while he lies asleep in bed, then awakens him, gives vent in speech to ferocious hatred, and stabs him. When, bloodstained knife in hand, she appears before Amintor, thinking she has won back his love, all she obtains from him is a cry of horror, and in the hope of a word of pardon she turns her knife against herself and falls dead at his feet.

Aspasia, whose unhappy lot names the play, is a colourless character. From the moment of her desertion she does no more than seek death, and she finally succeeds, when she is disguised as a man, in getting herself killed by Amintor's sword. But except for her this tragedy presents a rapid and powerful sequence of the most effective scenes, so well contrived, so eloquent, and so intense that the improbability of

or profound.

Except for Melantius, who is drawn strongly and sustainedly, the characters present many difficulties and inconsequences which resist analysis. Amintor is not only exasperating but also incomprehens
from striking at t
but what is there

en Evadne, haughty, brave, shameless, fierce, and superb
her an admirable acting part than a consistent character
is not amorous but ambitious, why does she agree with
ing on the concealment which robs her of the prestig
power of an avowed royal mistress? If she is merely
tious, why is her conversion so sudden and complete
she should yield to her brother's virile strength is com
nsible, but not that she should turn lovingly to th
ating Amintor. What we know of her prepares us il
er ferocity in the scene in which she kills the king: w
oo ignorant of the details of her fall to be convinced by
xplosion of hatred. Was it that she cherished in he
feelings deeper than the ambition which alone urged he
r first fault?

ese defects are, however, apparent only on reflection
cenic and dramatic qualities of the work are surprising
concentration is equal to that in the French tragedies
is no secondary plot, for Aspasia's fate is linked u
that of Evadne. The unity of place is, in its broad sense
rved, and the unity of time is respected: the whole of the
n takes place in the town of Rhodes on the eve and
ow of Evadne's wedding-day. Throughout, the play is
red easy by its harmonious verse and its graceful
age which even to-day is not out of date.

FLETCHER'S COLLABORATION WITH SHAKESPEARE.—It
s to have been after Beaumont's marriage, in 1613, that
wo friends separated and that Fletcher for a time col-
ated with Shakespeare. At least, it is admitted that
y VIII and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* are plays by
her or, according to the most recent criticism, by Fletcher
Massinger, which include certain passages by Shakespeare.
akespeare's custom was not to work with a colleague, but
cast the plays in his company's repertory which had come
em old, putting new life into them. In his last years,
ver, when he had already severed his connection with
tage and left London for Stratford-on-Avon, some of his
hes for plays may have remained unfinished, and he may
entrusted their completion to the most brilliant of the
ger dramatists. The two plays, chiefly *Henry VIII*,
great if scattered beauties. One of the noblest women's
cters, Catherine of Aragon, whom Henry VIII repudiates,

Hence his varied divisions of the line, his light or weak endings, and the practice which grew upon him of continuing a phrase from one line to another. Fletcher chose a line which in two out of three cases ends in one and sometimes in several hypermetric syllables. This soft but effeminate prolongation of sound hardly allows the voice to rise; it is like an oversoft cushion into which the foot sinks. It makes it impossible for the sense to be continued from one line to the next. This practice of Fletcher's is carried to the point at which it becomes a mannerism. It has the effect of shortening his sentences so that they are apt to be restricted to the line. Rhetorical effects are obviated, but there is, at the same time, a loss of scale. His style belonged to the future rather than the past, and was much in favour in the Restoration period when Shakespeare was considered to make too difficult an appeal to the mind and to be archaic.

(*d*) Fletcher's Collaboration with Massinger.—After Beaumont's death Fletcher, who had the habit of collaboration, found other partners, and there is hardly a contemporary playwright who did not work with him. The names of Jonson, Field, Tourneur, and Rowley are associated with his. The chief of his coadjutors was, however, Philip Massinger, who, before he ventured alone, produced ten plays with Fletcher in the four years from 1619 to 1622. Fletcher's junior by four years, he was in some sort his assistant and pupil. Fletcher, master of the play-factory, seems to have paid him for his work and taken sole credit for the plays they produced together, Massinger uttering no protest. The protest was, however, voiced, even immediately, by others, and recent criticism has established that Massinger took a considerable part in the composition of some of the most popular plays attributed to Fletcher only. Among these are the historical tragedies *Thierry and Theodoret* and *The False One* (1620), the comedies *The Little French Lawyer* (1619), *The Spanish Curate*, and *The Beggar's Bush*.

It seems to have been Massinger's subordinate task to write preliminary and concluding scenes, while Fletcher kept the critical scenes to himself. But the laborious junior often exceeded these narrow and ungrateful limits. More than Fletcher, he felt the need for regular composition; he had a taste for moral problems and a real genius for dialectical scenes and for legal discussions. The collaboration produced plays of rather mixed and unequal character, although

Fletcher's facile verve and Massinger's intelle
sometimes happily complementary to each othe
presently deal with Massinger's independent wo
impossible to consider this collaboration with
the extreme merit of the tragedies of *Thierry a*
and *The False One*. In the former the self-c

wherein lay its charm and its weakness. The i
of this poetry are pleasant to see and give an illu
sion of stability, but soon they are revealed as un
unsolid, unbound to the deep earth, so many ag
of waste matter to which deposits from every

poets to beautiful trees which are crowned with
cannot bear fruit.

CHAPTER VIII

HAKESPEARE'S SUCCESSORS—DRAMA UNDER CHARLES I (1625–42)

. *Philip Massinger (1584–1639).*[1] The playwrights of whom still have to speak belong to the reign of Charles I and uld therefore have place in the next book of this history. t they are, in the early part of their career, so entangled h their predecessors that they cannot easily be separated m them. To study them is to continue the earlier subject. therefore seems best to pursue the study of the drama un-erruptedly until, at a fast approaching date, the theatres re closed. When Charles I succeeded in 1625 only seven-n years of life were left to them.

The playwright who, after Fletcher, dominated the stage by : number and quality of his plays, had long worked with him a subordinate. To Philip Massinger thirty-seven plays are ributed of which only eighteen are extant. The remnant fices to outline a figure in literature which was both distinct d distinguished, although not entirely original. In his out-nding qualities, Massinger was a composite of Fletcher d Jonson. The incidents and characters of his tragedies : as romantic as Fletcher's, and he reproduces vices and ims as far removed from the ordinary as those drawn in *lpone.* Yet something in his plays is proper to himself, for cast in the ready-made moulds more doctrine and the oduct of greater reflective powers than his precursors. His ama is the drama of ideas. He seems to have been im-tient of the restrictions of the stage and the necessity of iking sacrifices to the lower elements in the public taste. :t, because he wished to succeed, he submitted, and there is much use of material expedients in his plays and as much lecency in his comic dialogue as in the work of any other iywright. When once, however, he had made these conces-

Plays, ed. Gifford, 4 vols. (1805; 3rd ed., 1 vol., 1850); same text ed. nningham, with addition of *Believe as You List* (1871); selected plays, ed. nons, 2 vols. (Mermaid Series, 1904); *The Duke of Millaine,* ed. Baldwin 18); *A New Way to Pay Old Debts,* ed. Cruickshank (Oxford, 1926); *The man Actor,* ed. Sandridge (Princeton Studies); *The Grand-Duke of Florence,* Stockholm (1933); *The City Madam,* ed. Kirk (Princeton Studies); *Believe You List,* ed. Sisson (Malone Society, 1928).
Studies: Cruickshank, *Philip Massinger* (Oxford, 1920); M. Chelli, *Le Drame Massinger* (capital work; 1924); idem, *Étude sur la collaboration de Massinger c Fletcher et son groupe* (1926).

sions; he allowed himself to exalt nobility of sentiment and eloquently to descant on the ideas which we feel that he held dear.

He began late. He was more than thirty years old when he is first discovered obscurely working for the theatre, more than forty when he produced the first works signed by his name alone. The son of a servant of the Pembroke family, he was sent to Oxford. After seven years of silence he is found at work and in Henslowe's pay, so poor that he had served one term in a debtors' prison. Although he was associated with Fletcher, who may be called the Cavalier poet, he did not share his mental attitude. He had no weakness for the court or the courtiers, and he could not, in spite of the

'he subjects of politics and
vere opposed to those of
flatter the patriotism of
the divine right of kings.

In *The Bondman*, he gave sympathetic representation of a revolt of slaves against their masters, showing himself a kind of socialist. He had the audacity to present to a public fed on declamations against popery the figure of an admirable Catholic priest, actually a Jesuit and yet endowed with all the virtues. In view of the danger to which he exposed his plays when he thus went counter to popular prejudice, we can hardly doubt that in such instances he was expressing cherished personal opinions

We have already noticed the considerable mass of work

an opportunity for self-revelation. He enjoys himself as he opposes the arguments of the Christians to those of the pagans.

A comparative study of this play and *Polyeucte* would bring

with whatever was presented to their minds. Everything still took material form for them. Thus the persecuting fury of the pagan Theophilus is personified in the demon Harfax, his servant, and the Christian enthusiasm of Dorothea, the virgin martyr, in the young page Angelo, who is in truth her guardian-angel and whom Dekker—his hand is felt here—has adorned with his most melodious poetry. The sufferings of the virgin and of the other Christians are detailed in all their variety of horror. The grace by which Theophilus is finally converted is symbolized by a basket of flowers and fruit brought to him to the sound of celestial music. His very remorse assumes a material form: he sees the ground beneath his feet paved with the eyes of the thousands of Christians he has martyred. Thus Massinger preserves all the powerful and popular allurements of the public stage while he devotes his better abilities to the discussion of ideas. He could not have won acceptance for his ideas unless he had abundantly satisfied that appetite for the concrete which long habit had bred in his audiences.

Presently we find him working alone, unhelped and unhindered. He wrote several comedies: *The City Madam* (1619), *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (1625), *The Guardian* (1633)—and many more tragedies and romantic plays: *The Fatal Dowry* (1619), *The Duke of Milan* (1620), *The Unnatural Combat* (1621), *The Maid of Honour* (1622), *The Bondman* (1623), *The Renegado* (1624), *The Roman Actor* (1626), *The Picture* (1629), *The Emperor of the East* (1631).

The one of all these plays which had the most lasting success was a comedy: *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*. Revived in the eighteenth century, it has kept a place in theatrical repertories. It is vigorously constructed, in Jonson's manner, but even more than Jonson's plays it lacks the true *vis comica*. The leading role, that of the usurer Sir Giles Overreach, extravagant as Marlowe's Barabas or Jonson's Sir Epicure Mammon, is in no way amusing. Sir Giles is a monster of cupidity to whom gold is a means of power and power a means of expressing cynical inhumanity. He is also an atheist, stayed in his course by nothing in heaven or on earth. He enjoys the misfortunes of a nephew whom he has expropriated, and whom he ignominously turns out of his house. His aim is to marry his daughter to a peer, not because he loves her, but in order that from the position this connection will give him he may insult all the gentlemen he has plundered. He

enlarges on his opinions and feelings with an improbable frankness, as when he declares that nothing affords him greater pleasure than the tears of the women and children his machinations have rendered destitute Although his scheming is finally defeated and he made a laughing-stock, and although he lives within a skilful plot sustained through scenes which are serious and comic by turns, he belongs not to comedy but to satire, and almost forbids laughter. The same is true of Luke in *The City Madam*, a very demon of ingratitude, hypocrisy, and malice whose turpitude would be [illegible] ho as the central figure of a [illegible] his unequalled moral per-

It is in serious drama that Massinger really shows his powers. In all the plays we have mentioned there are at least fine and eloquent passages and striking scenes. Two among them may be taken as affording the best illustration of the playwright's special talent.

Of *The Roman Actor*, Massinger himself states, 'I ever held it the most perfect birth of my Minerva.' There is undoubtedly a reminiscence of Jonson's *Sejanus* in this picture of the debauchery and cruelty of imperial Rome, but the play is none the less original. The subject is the love of Domitian and the imperious and sensual Domitia, the wife of a senator. Taking advantage of the emperor's blind passion, she gives the rein to all her caprices, even to desiring the indulgence of the frenzied passion she has conceived for the actor Paris while watching his performance. Domitian, when he is informed of this affair, kills Paris, but hesitates to order the immediate execution of his mistress. His vacillation costs him dear, for Domitia, infuriated by the death of Paris and knowing her own life in danger, takes the initiative. She conspires with all the victims of the emperor's lust and tyranny and, although he is warned by a soothsayer and takes many precautions, he is stabbed by the ladies of the palace with Domitia at their head. She pays the death penalty, but the tyrant has fallen.

These vigorous and skilful scenes are very effective Yet [illegible]

state. This last scene gives him the opportunity to utter, in a lofty speech, the best of that judicial eloquence which is a distinction of Massinger's dramatic work. Paris, however, does more than plead. Within this drama he successively acts in three plays or fragments, taking the parts of a doctor who cures a miser of his avarice, a lover who implores his unfeeling mistress, and a servant who, in his master's absence, suffers the solicitations of that master's wife and yields to her for fear of her revenge. The part of Paris gives scope for the display of such a variety of talents, that from an actor's point of view, few are richer or more tempting. The character is, moreover, traced skilfully and with a sure hand. Paris's sincere faith in the moral influence of his art attracts sympathy, and his plight, when very respectfully he refuses Domitia's advances, is touching. He does not love her, but he knows that if he repels her she will cause his death. His first thought is, very naturally, for his own safety, but his imagination is presently caught by the idea of a glorious, a theatrical death. What more magnificent situation could there be than that of an actor refusing an empress? He thus goes to his death as a believer goes to martyrdom.

This play, all violence, tumult, and crime, should be contrasted with another, *The Maid of Honour*, the most classical Massinger ever wrote, one in which a simple plot is smoothly unfolded and which has unity of action and a regular construction. The central figure is, moreover, a true heroine who incarnates virtue, love, and honour. Camiola, the maid of honour, might be one of Corneille's heroines, and like them she has been subject to Spanish influence. She seeks glory in virtue, and is mistress of her heart, for all that it beats passionately. Chimène and Pauline have in her an elder sister whom they never knew.

Camiola, who is rich, is courted at one and the same time by an opulent and high-born coxcomb—a grotesque who never makes us smile and is the sole blemish of this fine play—by an abject court favourite, by a young page ready to make any sacrifice for her, and by the king's natural brother, the handsome, brave, and seductive Bartoldo. She loves Bartoldo, but refuses him because he is a Knight of Malta and would break his vow of celibacy if he married her. He would fall short of the ideal, and she would have his glory all intact. Thus virtue forbids her to follow her heart, and the discouraged Bartoldo sets out as a volunteer for a distant war,

he repeats from play to play, sometimes clothing them in identical words. It has even been possible to make a list of these. Massinger is rather an industrious than an inspired poet, and his plays do not, like those of some of his less correct rivals, give either the surprise or the enjoyment of lyricism. Taken altogether, however, his massive and often noble work is such that it redeems his age from the charge of decadence.

2. *John Ford* (*1586–1639?*).[1]—John Ford, who was the same age as Massinger, produced, at the same time as he, work which was narrower than his but bore more clearly the impress of its author's personality. He belonged to a good Devonshire family and was in 1602 admitted to the Middle Temple. This is as much as is known of his life. To imagine his person we are helped only by two lines which show a pensive and solitary figure:

> Deep in a dump John Forde was alone got,
> With folded arms and melancholy hat.

His drama is influenced by Burton's famous *Anatomy of Melancholy* which appeared at the same time as his first plays. Some youthful verse and prose, still extant, reveal him as an amoral pagan, convinced of the futility of passion and the power of love to justify itself. His work betrays a morbid temperament, curious of the strange and attracted by the perverse, yet a true poet who wrote carefully, harmoniously, and restrainedly, and whose nature inclined him to a dramatic form more classical than that affected by his predecessors.

He collaborated with Webster, Rowley, and Dekker, but was less prodigal of his co-operation than his contemporaries. The best known of the plays he thus produced is *The Witch of Edmonton*, of which Dekker seems to have been the principal author. The essential part of as much of Ford's own work as has been preserved consists of five plays, *The Lover's Melancholy*, *'Tis Pity She 's a Whore*, *The Broken Heart*, *Love's Sacrifice*, and *Perkin Warbeck*, all written between 1627 and 1633.

The last-named is a drama of English history, the final example of a *genre*, once popular, which was neglected after the end of the sixteenth century. *Perkin Warbeck* is a well-contrived and fairly interesting but rather flat play. Nothing in it is either new or original.

[1] Works ed. Gifford, revised Dyce, 3 vols. (1869 and 1895); ed. H. de Vocht (Louvain, 1927–); selected plays ed. Ellis (Mermaid Series, 1888); *'Tis Pity She 's a Whore and The Broken Heart*, ed. S. P. Sherman (Belles Lettres Series, 1916); *Perkin Warbeck*, ed. M. C. Struble (1926). See M. J. Sargeaunt, *John Ford* (Oxford, 1935).

In this it is unlike Ford's other plays. Even t of them, *The Lover's Melancholy*, is attractive bec delicate handling of emotions and the graces of *Love's Sacrifice*, in spite of reminiscences of *Othell* new and striking Bianca has no precedent She and beautiful girl, humbly born, who becomes the w Duke of Pavia. When Fernando, a fine gentleman the duke's favourite, pays court to her, she reject vances indignantly, yet she loves him and soon aft sudden change of attitude, offers herself to him, decla will kill herself on the morrow Her heroic passion greatness to Fernando, who refrains from desecrating he and sends her away Yet they meet again, and th about to yield to their passion when the duke, who is v surprises them together and stabs Bianca.

The irresistible force of love is more clearly illustrated *Pity She's a Whore*, which has incest for its theme This was not now staged for the first time, for it figures impor in *A King and No King*, where Beaumont and Fletcher placently describe the passion of King Arbaces for his rep sister. Here, however, the discovery, at the end of the of the true origin of Arbaces changes incest into legiti love. Ford's play contains no such palliative It is, with question, his sister Annabella whom Giovanni loves sionately, and the savour of the incest is one of the co ponents of the exaltation of their feelings for each oth The passionate ardours of Romeo and Juliet are repea after the lapse of a generation and are seasoned with vice a guilt Nothing better shows the development and the decli of the drama· no longer content with normal passions, it w seeking satisfaction in perverted pleasure. Giovanni is no only in love; he is also a theorist who apologizes for his crime The scenes between the guilty pair have a warmth which proves that Ford sympathized with them in the intoxication of their passion and in their sin The play does indeed conclude on the note of horror, bloodshed mingling with voluptuousness When Annabella, now another man's wife, is seized with remorse and refuses herself to her brother, he kills her and reappears with her heart on the point of his dagger, so that the morbid and the melodramatic are combined. This story of incestuous love occurs in a play which has several other plots, all of them detestable and none more so than that in which Ford tries his hand at clowning But

the poetry of fatality which pervades the principal episode is undeniable.

The Broken Heart, a tragedy which is full of the melancholy of unhappy love and suffering virtue, is much more harmonious and has a moral much less suspect. The scene of action is laid in Sparta, doubtless in sign of the heroism of tortured hearts. Penthea, who loved Orgilus, has been forced by the tyranny of her brother Ithocles to marry the rich and jealous Bassanes. Her heart is still faithful to Orgilus, but while she makes him a declaration of undying love, she tells him that she is resolved never to fail in her wifely duty. The struggle within her breast is, however, such that she gives way to madness and is heard to utter sad and strange words. She swears never to eat again in order that her rebellious blood, which impels her to adultery, may cease to flow. She then dies.

But her brother Ithocles, who has been so hard to her, himself learns the power of love. He loses his heart utterly to fair Calantha, the king's daughter, and his passion enlightens him on his cruelty in parting Penthea and Orgilus. In a scene between him and Penthea, he begs her pardon for his past conduct. He listens to her vehement reproaches in silence, and finally touches her so that she consents to help him with Calantha. Calantha is quite ready to love the young hero, and their marriage has been determined when Orgilus, who has sworn vengeance, stabs Ithocles.

There is here a scene of which the *bravura* is imitated from Marston's *Malcontent*. While Calantha is dancing at a court ball, all joy at the thought of her approaching marriage, she hears first that the king, her father, has just died; then that Penthea has that moment breathed her last, and finally that Ithocles has been stabbed. The Spartan princes responds only by asking the muscians to play a livelier air. When the dance has ended, she repeats the news she has just received to the court. She has become queen and it is as a queen that she speaks. She fulfils her first duty by ordering the murderer of Ithocles to be executed; then, in the temple in which th coronation ceremony is to be performed, she informs al present that, while they thought she was dancing unfeelingly she received a mortal wound. And when she has kissed th dead lips of Ithocles and placed a ring on his finger, she di of a broken heart to the sound of a dirge which she herse has 'fitted' for her end.

[illegible] its [illegible] an [illegible] Its value is in its poetry, in the impression it constantly gives of suffering virtue and implacable passion. Ford, by the belief in fatality which dominates his work, joins hands with the Greeks, not by an effect of mere artistry but in virtue of a special temperament. The impression he makes is as deep as it is painful. His plays move in a heavy, still, and thundery atmosphere. Their lack of even the lightest breath of lively and wholesome air is disquieting. Ford's persistence in painting exquisite suffering and the refinements of perversity is a manifest sign of decadence, yet it constitutes his originality which outweighs his reminiscences and his borrowing.

3. *James Shirley (1596–1666)*.[1]—James Shirley, whom Lamb calls 'the last of a great race,' was a more prolific and a more adaptable writer than Ford. His plays are among the most correct and the most outstanding of those which appeared in the reign of Charles I, that is from 1625 until the theatres were closed in 1642. But while Ford's work struck, with all its faults, a note which was new and sometimes very penetrating, Shirley at his best did no more than continue cleverly what Jonson, Fletcher, and Massinger had begun, imparting nothing peculiarly his own.

Shirley was an educated man who had been at both universities, and a fair poet who wrote a *Narcissus* inspired by Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. He was first a schoolmaster and then a Protestant clergyman, but gave up his living when he was converted to Catholicism. He began to write for the stage when he was about thirty years old, won favour at court and was commissioned to compose masques which enjoyed a very high repute. He had the lyric gift of his predecessors and the song, 'The glories of our blood and state,' which occurs in one of his plays, is in every anthology. His production was checked by the Revolution. He was of the king's party and went into exile in France after the failure of the Royalist cause, afterwards returning to England and to his schoolmaster's calling. He had the satisfaction of witnessing the Restoration and the revival of his plays, but he died in the Fire of London in 1666. He is thus a link between two periods of dramatic history.

[1] *Dramatic Works and Poems*, ed. Gifford and Dyce, 6 vols. (1833), selected plays ed. Gosse (Mermaid Series, 1888); study by A. H. Nason (N. York, 1915)

He gained distinction in tragedy and in comedy. More than Massinger, and especially more than Ford, he has the adaptability necessary to success in these opposite fields.

His best two tragedies are *The Traitor* (1631) and *The Cardinal* (1641). *The Traitor* is based on the famous story of Lorenzo de' Medici to which Musset returned in *Lorenzaccio*. The psychological interest of Musset's play, the portrayal of a man of noble character, ruled by republican opinions, who becomes vicious while he seeks to corrupt the Duke of Florence in order to ruin him, is wanting in Shirley's tragedy. Shirley's Lorenzo is impelled to betray the duke by the mere ambition to usurp his throne. He is throughout an underhand and hypocritical scoundrel. The interest of the play lies in his intrigues and in the skill with which he lays his plots and diverts suspicion from himself. On occasion he simulates republican sentiment, but only in order the better to ensnare his dupes. The play undoubtedly includes effective scenes, but the most striking of them are too closely imitated from Cyril Tourneur's *Revenger's Tragedy*. The tragedy is, however, well constructed and carefully written.

The Cardinal, which Shirley himself esteemed his masterpiece, is in the class of tragedies of bloodshed and horror and connected with Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*. It has enough of the tragic force of this model to show that great sombre subjects persisted to the end in the drama of the Renascence. Structurally it is weaker than *The Traitor*.

Because Shirley's comedies are partly realistic; because they paint manners and fashions and literary crazes which changed with years, they are newer than his tragedies. While he cannot create really original characters, he adroitly sketches scenes from the life of the well-to-do classes of his day. This understanding of contemporary society keeps alive *The Wedding* (1626), *The Changes* (1632), *Hyde Park* (1632), *The Gamester* (1633), and especially *The Lady of Pleasure* (1635). This last play, which is full of arguments between a husband and his wife, she desiring always to be in the mode and he fearing that she will ruin him, is the prototype of more than one comedy of the succeeding age. In spite of its inferior vigour and wit, it foreshadows Vanbrugh's *Provoked Husband*, and even, one hundred and fifty years in advance, Sheridan's *School for Scandal* and the differences of Sir Peter with Lady Teazle.

Besides these comedies of manners, Shirley wrote others which are romantic and might equally well be called tragi-

comedies. In these he shows himself the faithful disciple of Fletcher, like whom he is sometimes influenced by Spain Spanish drama was beginning to be known and it was not therefore to Spanish stories that Shirley had recourse. For *The Young Admiral* he went straight to Lope de Vega and for *The Opportunity* (1634) to Tirso de Molina. The one of his romantic comedies which he himself esteemed the best is *The Imposture.* In this an ambitious aspirant to the hand of the daughter of the Duke of Mantua seeks to get rid of a formidable rival, the son of the Duke of Ferrara, by causing a meeting between him and a mistress of his own whom he has substituted for the high-born maiden.

To sum up: Shirley's comedies can be read with a calm pleasure, for his ingenuity is sometimes satisfying, his pictures of contemporary life are sometimes interesting and his elegant style is generally meritorious, but he never affords the lively enjoyment which his predecessors supplied, at least intermittently. He continued a tradition to which he gave no freshness and contributed nothing very new

4. *Glapthorne and Brome.*—It was especially by his merits as a writer that Shirley surpassed all the later playwrights[1] except Ford. There was, for instance, Henry Glapthorne, who between 1635 and 1642 wrote several plays of which the best, *Argalus and Parthenia*, is borrowed from the *Arcadia* He does not lack a certain grace, but his debased blank verse is like halting prose and awakens a longing for prose Richard Brome's verse is more regular and his plays have more savour. He was first the servant and then the [illegible] of Ben Jonson, who [illegible] as his master's realis[illegible] on life He is also [illegible] him son, and he al[illegible]

[1] Of [illegible]

[illegible] Glapthorne, *Plays* [illegible] both reprinted by Pearson

D'Avenant, *Dramatic Works* [illegible] *Dramatic Work*[illegible]

[illegible]

of [illegible]

vol [illegible]

T[illegible] *and Amyntas*, ed J J Parry (Oxford, 1917,

Sir John Suckling, *Works*, ed A Hamilton Thompson (1910)

Two comedies by John Day, two by Nathaniel Field, and one by Henry Porter are included in *Nero and Other Plays* (Mermaid Series, 1888)

Such works of the other playwrights as have been reprinted are included in *Dodsley's Old English Plays* (1st ed., 1744, re-ed by Hazlitt, 15 vols, 1874–5

The most interesting of his fifteen plays are *The City Wit, or The Woman wears the Breeches*, and *A Jovial Crew, or The Merry Beggars*. The first of these is a light-hearted satire on the pretensions of rank and wealth, and deals shrewd blows at the citizens whose care for profit made them careless of honour. *A Jovial Crew, or The Merry Beggars* echoes Dekker's sympathy for the unfortunate, and includes the character of a certain Springlove, happy when he is in the open air, tramping the fields and the lanes, who recalls Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, but is an honester man than he.

Brome should have been more ambitious and less humble. He introduces himself modestly as a man of no account, calls himself not a poet but a playmaker. Yet he seems to have taken conscientious pains with his work. While his is a prosaic spirit, while he is usually attracted by realities of no elevated order, he is, none the less, both observant and vigorous.

5. *Other Playwrights of the Second Rank.*—This review of the dramatic writers of the Renascence has hitherto included only the principal names. To be complete it should also deal with a fair number of authors of the second rank, of whom some have merit, and with several anonymous plays of which certain are highly interesting.

Some of these plays were ascribed to Shakespeare by contemporary publishers or have been attributed to him subsequently.[1] Among them are two on the national history which are very remarkable, *Edward the Third* and *Sir Thomas More*, and also an excellent comedy, *The Merry Devil of Edmonton*, and a romantic play, *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, of which Fletcher was the principal author, although most critics admit that Shakespeare had a hand in it. These plays from the Shakespeare apocrypha must be added to those already studied, *Arden of Feversham* and *A Yorkshire Tragedy*. They are the most noteworthy of a considerable group of which the authorship is conjectural. Another anonymous play written with much talent is *Nero*,[2] printed in 1633. It is the work of a mediocre playwright who was both a scholar and a true poet.

To the authors already cited, certain others who wrote in the last years of Elizabeth should be added: William Haughton,

[1] *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*, ed. C. F. T. Brooke (1908); A. W. Pollard, *Shakespeare's Fight with the Pirates* (1920).
[2] *Nero and Other Plays* (Mermaid Series, 1888).

Carlell's plays are based on d'Urfé and Mademoiselle de Scudéry, as are those of D'Avenant, whose taste for sentimental heroics and the casuistry of love blazed the track for the heroic plays of the reign of Charles II.

6. *The Closing of the Theatres. Conclusion.*—Dramatic production, abundant to the last, was suddenly checked in 1642, when the theatres were closed by Parliament. After the playhouses had struggled for existence against the Puritans for three-quarters of a century, and made them their laughing-stock, it was to the Puritans that victory finally fell. The stage had no sooner become popular than the war had been declared. Gosson was writing his *School of Abuse* in 1579; in 1583 the Puritan Philip Stubbs renewed the attack much more vigorously with his *Anatomy of Abuses,* in which he claims biblical support for his condemnation of the drama. His book provoked many replies—from Lodge, Nashe, Field, Gager, Heywood, and others. Fifty years later a pendant to it was supplied by the famous *Histriomastix* of William Prynne (1632). This fierce denunciation from the pen of a fanatic was the result of seven years of work and reached enormous dimensions. It is a depository of all the accumulated diatribes of the Fathers of the Church and the moralists against plays and actors; and it was also a direct attack on the court, where at this time dramatic art found its sole support. The companies of actors has been protected by various noblemen under Elizabeth, but from the time of the accession of James I they all depended on the king or the queen, and such concentration was accentuated under Charles I. Prynne stigmatized as 'notorious whores' the leading actresses, whom Queen Henrietta had brought over from France, and he paid for his insults when he was sentenced to lose his ears in the pillory, to pay a heavy fine, and to be imprisoned at the king's pleasure. Nine years after the appearance of his book, Parliament had barely secured its triumph over the king when it ordered the closing of the theatres. Their association with royalty proved unfortunate for them. The demolition of all the playhouses was decreed; all actors seized were ordered to be whipped; and every one who attended a dramatic performance was made liable to a fine of five shillings. For eighteen years the theatres, which had been places of intense, noisy life, were silent. When they were once more thrown open, their repertory was largely new and their audiences were largely different.

nce. When extant plays and plays which
their titles are added together, their total
ar a thousand, and this luxuriant prolificity
within narrow limits of time. Only sixty-
ate the date on which the first public theatre
that on which all the playhouses were closed.
eive of a man who in the course of his life was

when he was about twenty; Shakespeare's
and *Henry IV*, Ben Jonson's *Every Man in*
Dekker's *Shoemakers Holiday* when he was
ing Lear and *Macbeth*, Jonson's *Volpone*,
Revenger's Tragedy and Fletcher's *Faithful*
bout forty; Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's*
r's *White Devil* and Middleton's *A Chaste*
ide at about forty-five; the first plays in

his later sixties.
tnessing this sequence of playwrights and
ceived an evolution? The family likeness
these works, composed on the same principle,
en it from him. Nearly all of them divide a
om invented by the author but rather taken
scenes. They thus share their descent from

e comedy and tragedy.
o each other is the result of this conception of
y have in common, and the breadth of the
ch they depend produces, at the same time,
There ... of
uctur ... of
es of ... ght

merely accepts them, are necessarily impersonal and have a clearly eliminating effect. There is nothing academic about these plays, not even about those of the classicist Jonson. A lively air blows through them all. The place given, even in tragedy, to a homely comic element is a corrective of romanticism and imparts realism everywhere. The all-pervading poetry and the habitual lyricism are controlled, tempered, and vivified by this realism. Nothing is quite cut off from the earth, entirely in the clouds, in a world of abstraction. The element of direct observation, the reflections of real life which occur in some scene of every play, give abiding interest to parts of even the most mediocre and factitious production.

The very free field given to the dramatists also enabled them to let their personality have play. Each of them could, according to his temperament and powers and his opportunities of observation, imprint his own mark on his work. Ignorant though we are of the limits of the individual accomplishment of playwrights, and in spite of the difficulties due to the custom of collaboration, we easily distinguish certain very distinct figures. Nothing is less liable to be confused than Lyly's courtly wit, Marlowe's fiery extravagance, Dekker's tender, sentimental realism, Marston's cynical harshness, the robustness of Jonson's thought and style, the sombre, melodramatic poetry of Webster, Heywood's simple pathos, Middleton's dry, cutting manner, the skilful and elegant romanticism of Beaumont and Fletcher, the rhetorical vein of Massinger, and Ford's disquieting subtlety, not to mention the superior genius at the centre of this constellation, 'myriad-minded Shakespeare,' who is not to be contained by a couple of epithets.

The gifts of life, variety, poetry, and realism lead us to overlook defects which are numerous and sometimes enormous—loose, disjointed, clumsy, or overweighted composition, the assignment of overmuch space to broad, low buffoonery, the cult of melodramatic effects, the lavish introduction of physical horrors and macabre subjects, the frequent lack of execution and of loftiness of aim, consequent on the desire for immediate success.

In what is the evolution of this drama perceptible? Is it to be found elsewhere than in the differences between authors? Does it consist in a rise which culminates in Shakespeare's masterpieces and a subsequent decline? Even if, with in-

finite difficulty, Shakespeare be abstracted from the field of consideration, we perceive, as is natural, that the qualities properly of the stage were almost constantly acquiring that additional skill which only experience can confer. There is something archaic about the first plays even of the great period, about the too plainly deliberate clash of wits in Lyly, and about Marlowe's vast declamations. Dramatic style is gradually fashioned and made flexible; the metrical line, at ... prose is more ... in- ... har- ... and ... hose who aspire to be such. The clown ... late; he is a comic actor rather than a character. He does not long survive Shakespeare, who uses him with extreme skill ... taint of unreality. ... drama, not indeed ... lism. In the work ... rdly anything sub- ... plays which is not ... times astonishingly ... tes them from their predecessors. The same force of realism sweeps away, little by little, the fantastic and fairy elements which become less popular. The appeal to imagination loses strength and daring If character and situations tend to be less true to nature, it is not that the poets give more space to dreams, but that, as their knowledge of feeling grows less sure, they show an increased inclination for sensation.

They draw nearer to reality in externals while in essentials they become more remote from it: comedy shows a preference for eccentricity and anomalies, and tragedy passes from the epic to the romantic.

It cannot be denied that the romantic was there from the beginning, but from decade to decade it developed and little by little superseded the historical character which at first belonged t... Dramas of national history ceased, with hardl... xteenth century. ... foreign history, subjects came to be supplied by romances, whether Italian, Spanish or French. More and more, the portrayal of normal thought and feeling made room for that of the

much more various than it at first seems to be. Yet it is undeniable that the religious revival gave this generation its general character and distinguished it from the preceding one. In exchange for the liberty it partly lost, it acquired seriousness, a severe dignity. Rich humanity, unlimited curiosity, the sense of the comic mingling with the sense of the tragic in the portrayal of life: all gave place to a passionate controversy on the forms of the Christian religion and a search, so constant that it was an obsession, for the way of salvation.

2. *Sir Thomas Browne* (*1605–82*).[1]—The contrast is perhaps most apparent in prose. There were no more novels, no more diverting pictures of manners, no entertaining fruits of invention; there were not even the disinterested lucubrations of humanists whose reading amused them. The passage from Robert Burton to Sir Thomas Browne is in this respect very characteristic. The contrast between them is shown up by the very resemblance which make it possible to compare them. Like Burton, Browne was a very learned man, a humanist astonishingly widely and variously read. He was familiar with secular and sacred authors; he lived in studious retirement, complacently following the thread of his thought. He too was an eccentric, and his posthumous vicissitudes were like those of Burton, for he was all but forgotten in the eighteenth century and was restored to honour by Lamb and the romantics.

But they differed even more than they resembled each other. Burton was a clergyman, hauntingly preoccupied with medicine. He himself states that he was by his profession a divine and by his inclination a physician. His whole book shows his taste for observing facts and details, rather than a desire to inquire into the origin and end of man.

Browne, on the other hand, was a physician by profession and a divine or preacher by inclination. He was a mystic. Outwardly, his life passed happily and calmly, reflecting in no way the troubles of the civil war. He was a Royalist and an Anglican, but he did not compromise himself and his peace was not disturbed. The exercise of his art won him

[1] Works ed. Wilkin, 4 vols. (1835–6); ed. Sayle, 3 vols. (1904); ed. G. L. Keynes, 6 vols. (1928–31); *Religio Medici* and *Hydriotaphia*, ed. J. W. Murison (Pitt Press, 1922). See E. Gosse, *Sir Thomas Browne* (English Men of Letters, 1905); W. P. Dunne, *Sir Thomas Browne, a Study in Religious Philosophy* (1926); O. Leroy, *Le Chevalier Thomas Browne, médecin, styliste et métaphysicien* (1931).

invariably leading him to contempt of knowledge. 'It is better to sit down in a modest ignorance and rest content with the natural blessing of our own reasons, than buy the uncertain knowledge of this life with sweat and vexation, which death gives every fool gratis.' Thus, while he constantly uses his reason, he has no hope of learning by it the things of greatest moment to him. His appetite for faith is great. Far from rejecting religion because it demands concessions from reason, he would have it yet more exacting:

As for those wingy mysteries in divinity and airy subtleties in religion which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater* of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith. . . . I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an *O altitudo!*

Far from envying the early Christians the miracles which they witnessed and which compelled them to believe, he considers that their experience would make his faith too little meritorious. Moreover, he sees miracles everywhere, even in existence at its simplest. 'Now for my life, it is a miracle of thirty years, which to relate were not a history but a piece of poetry, and would sound to common ears like a fable.'

His habitual themes are those of the preacher—the vanity of glory, the nearness of death. He renews them with singularly erudite reminiscences which rekindle the ashes of the most remote historical past, and with constant references to the universe and to cosmographical facts. Hence there is frequently a strangeness and also a loftiness in his writings: thoughts and images are magnified; he imparts a great scale which is natural to him.

The fantastic character of the period is revealed. Browne has affinities with Donne and the 'metaphysical' poets. When he wishes to mock man's vain efforts to perpetuate after death a body vowed to destruction, he speaks of

Egyptian ingenuity . . . contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies, to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity, feeding the wind, and folly. The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.

He gives rein to his fancy in *The Garden of Cyrus*, which is a dissertation on quincunxes. Disposition in quincunxes and the number five gradually take on for him a mystic value. He finds quincunxes everywhere—in the sky, on the earth, in the mind of man, in the notes of music, in the optic nerve,

in the roots of trees, in leaves. His strangeness of thought is indeed excused by a vein of humour: his capricious leave-taking of his subject is famous. He has worked late into the night; the stars are waning and urge him to rest. 'But the quincunx of heaven (the Hyades) runs low, and 'tis time to . . . To keep our eyes open . . . The huntsmen are up . . . ast their first sleep in Persia.'

Even when Browne deals with the subject he has most at heart—oblivion—he gives free play to his dilettante imagination. His *Hydriotaphia, or Urn Burial* (1658), was inspired by the discovery in a field of some fifty urns containing the remains of human bones. This induced him to meditate on . . .

survival in memory, which, even in primitive man, was a mad hope, becomes such in a much greater degree as the world grows old and nears its end:

Twenty-seven names make up the first story before the flood, and the . . .

Thus Browne, as he writes, sometimes recalls Montaigne by his confessions, sometimes foreshadows Pascal by the . . .

on his own courage, charity, and pity for another's ills, and . . .

s

differentiated from Pascal by what may be called his complacent redundancy. In this there is something of literary artifice, a too apparent rhetoric, and there is also a taste for the eccentric which is evidence of less intense and less inexorable seriousness than belonged to Pascal.

He is, in fact, an artist rather than a thinker, and more interesting as a writer than as a man. His prose is admirable. His style is very distinct from Burton's. His sentences are short, clearly outlined, and modern and restrained in construction. He dates by his vocabulary, for he is a great latinizer. Words which Burton leaves in Latin, in the middle of a sentence, are retained but Anglicized by Browne. His love of the noble shows itself in his preference for long, learned terms. But his search for latinized words is also inspired by his love of cadences. He believes in the music of periods as the poet does in that of verse. He had a passion for harmony, loved it in the sound of organs, even found food for it in the music he heard in taverns. 'There is something in it of divinity more than the ear discovers: it is an hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God—such a melody to the ear as the whole world, well understood, would afford the understanding.' This passion led Browne instinctively to choose the most melodious words, those which make his sentences musical. So subtle is his use of sonorities, that few poets afford in their verses a better feast to the ear than does this mystical doctor in his prose.

3. *The Anglican Clergy. Jeremy Taylor.*[1]—Sir Thomas Browne, religious though he was, was in a sense independent and a follower of his own fancy. But the renewal of piety in the very heart of Anglicanism caused some memorable pages of English prose to be written. Under Charles I and the Commonwealth, Richard Hooker and John Donne found worthy successors. Archbishop Laud (1575–1645) was the head of the Church established under Charles I and also, since he attempted to impose the Anglican liturgy on England and on the Presbyterians of Scotland, an architect of the Civil War as he was one of its first victims. He was much hated, and although he opposed Rome he received the supreme insult of an accusation of popery. He was not brought back

[1] Works, ed. Heber, revised by C. P. Eden, 10 vols. (1847–52); *Holy Living and Dying*, in Bohn's Library; *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living*, ed. Waller, 2 vols. (1900); an excellent volume of extracts, with critical introduction, by L. P. Smith, entitled *The Golden Grove* (Oxford, 1930). Studies by E. Gosse (English Men of Letters, 1904); W. J. Brown (English Theologians, 1925).

to Catholicism, but the circumstance that his chief adversaries were the Puritans and the Presbyterians led him to revive everything in Anglicanism which could strengthen the hierarchy, discipline, and ceremonial. He desired to give the Anglican form of worship t
from Calvinism and is the n

ton,
piety
portr
in contrast to his subtle and often enigmatic poetry. He tells what should be the life, the character and education of a country clergyman, how he should pray, preach, and behave on Sundays, how he should keep his church and what rule

stition and carelessness, between the gilded luxury of a Catholic cathedral and the depressing nakedness of a dissenters' chapel. Hooker's just mean is realized in the decoration of the church.

George Herbert was one of the intimate friends of Nicholas Ferrar, who founded at about this time the curious community of Little Gidding, a very characteristic expression of the Catholic aspirations of the High Church party. Ferrar, a man of business, who was highly educated, had been in Parliament and had travelled much, refused to respond to

[1] *A Priest to the Temple, or The Country Parson*, ed. H. C Beeching (1916).

the appeal of Rome because he was scandalized by Italian morals, but desired to transport to England certain practices of Roman discipline which he admired. He retired in 1625 to the village of Little Gidding, and there founded a sort of Protestant monastery in which he lived with his family, as in a devout retreat, apportioning certain hours to prayer, reading, and work. He was approved by Laud, who ordained him deacon, and visited and praised by Charles I. There is a modern and attractive description of this community, living piously and practising the highest principles, in J. H. Shorthouse's mystical novel, *John Inglesant*. It had something in common with the French Port-Royal, but while Port-Royal was Catholic in an austere spirit akin to Calvinism, Little Gidding, in a Protestant country, almost yearned for the Roman tradition which it attempted, a little romantically, to revive. The community was abolished by Parliament in 1646. Ferrar's books—he died in 1637—were destroyed and his house and church pillaged.

The spirit of gentleness and poetry by which such as Herbert and Ferrar were animated recurs in the work of the great Anglican preacher of the middle of this century, Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), who has been called the Shakespeare and the Spenser of the pulpit, the English Chrysostom and the most eloquent of theologians. He distinguished himself as a preacher as early as 1634, when he left Cambridge, was patronized by Laud and became chaplain in ordinary to Charles I. As chaplain of the royal army during the Civil War he was made prisoner and deprived of his benefices. He retired to Wales, where, to secure a livelihood, he founded a school. The Restoration brought him the Irish bishopric of Dromore, and so many cares and controversies as accompaniments to the episcopal dignity that he sighed for a country living. He was obliged to expel thirty-one clergymen who were refractory to the episcopalian order, and his liberality and kindliness made the necessity for persecution really painful to him.

The misfortunes of their Church had indeed turned the Anglicans into champions of religious liberty. After hunting down Catholics and Puritans for fifty years, and severely prohibiting Puritans from preaching, they were now demanding toleration. Taylor became their mouthpiece, without recantation, for he was tolerant by nature. This characteristic gives its high value to his great treatise *A Discourse of the*

by his charmed contemplation of nature. Taylor is a prose

render his thought clear and concrete. As he follows up his similes and develops them, he sometimes recalls the fancy or even the slightly mannered ingenuity of the poets of the Renascence. The idea of a rose induces him to paint it in detail, that of the sunrise to describe its successive phases. It happens to him to say that prayer rises like a lark, and thereupon he gives himself free rein:

wa

bra

pages. They impart a charming grace and freshness, but the preacher who voices them may be accused of lingering on the path of duty to play and cull flowers. They rob his eloquence of some force of urgency. The logician is obscured by the artist.

the appeal of Rome because he was scandalized by Italian morals, but desired to transport to England certain practices of Roman discipline which he admired. He retired in 1625 to the village of Little Gidding, and there founded a sort of Protestant monastery in which he lived with his family, as in a devout retreat, apportioning certain hours to prayer, reading, and work. He was approved by Laud, who ordained him deacon, and visited and praised by Charles I. There is a modern and attractive description of this community, living piously and practising the highest principles, in J. H. Shorthouse's mystical novel, *John Inglesant*. It had something in common with the French Port-Royal, but while Port-Royal was Catholic in an austere spirit akin to Calvinism, Little Gidding, in a Protestant country, almost yearned for the Roman tradition which it attempted, a little romantically, to revive. The community was abolished by Parliament in 1646. Ferrar's books—he died in 1637—were destroyed and his house and church pillaged.

The spirit of gentleness and poetry by which such as Herbert and Ferrar were animated recurs in the work of the great Anglican preacher of the middle of this century, Jeremy Taylor (1613-67), who has been called the Shakespeare and the Spenser of the pulpit, the English Chrysostom and the most eloquent of theologians. He distinguished himself as a preacher as early as 1634, when he left Cambridge, was patronized by Laud and became chaplain in ordinary to Charles I. As chaplain of the royal army during the Civil War he was made prisoner and deprived of his benefices. He retired to Wales, where, to secure a livelihood, he founded a school. The Restoration brought him the Irish bishopric of Dromore, and so many cares and controversies as accompaniments to the episcopal dignity that he sighed for a country living. He was obliged to expel thirty-one clergymen who were refractory to the episcopalian order, and his liberality and kindliness made the necessity for persecution really painful to him.

The misfortunes of their Church had indeed turned the Anglicans into champions of religious liberty. After hunting down Catholics and Puritans for fifty years, and severely prohibiting Puritans from preaching, they were now demanding toleration. Taylor became their mouthpiece, without recantation, for he was tolerant by nature. This characteristic gives its high value to his great treatise *A Discourse of the*

Liberty of Prophesying with its just limits and temper, showing the unreasonableness of prescribing to other men's faith and the iniquity of persecuting differing opinions (1646). He founds

or even the slightly mannered ingenuity of the poets of the Renascence. The idea of a rose induces him to paint it in detail, that of the sunrise to describe its successive phases. It happens to him to say that prayer rises like a lark, and thereupon he gives himself free rein:

For so have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upwards, singing as he rises, and hopes to get to heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back with the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motions made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the libra-

It is the same harmless thing that a poor shepherd suffered yesterday, or a maid-servant to-day; and at the same time in which you die, in that very night a thousand creatures die with you, some wise men, and many fools; and the wisdom of the first will not quit him, and the folly of the latter does not make him unable to die.

Taylor was, moreover, not only an observer of inanimate nature, but also a psychologist of great delicacy who knew the heart of man. No one else has spoken of the love between husband and wife, its frailty soon after marriage and the strength it acquires by mutual trials, with as much insight and poetry as this clergyman in his sermon on the marriage-ring.

A delightful anthology can be compiled from his work. His prose is the most varied in tone and the most modern of his time. He had his share of the seductive gift. He had a broad sympathy for nature, human and other, and to this he added a taste for reading the profane authors of antiquity. He quotes Petronius and the Anthology neither pedantically nor apologetically but spontaneously, because some anecdote or line of poetry has enriched his memory. He is a proof that the best of the clergy had absorbed the culture of the Renascence and become the depositories of literary and poetic sensibility. Henceforward it is possible to regard their role as enlightened purveyors of civilization confidently and hopefully, whether they occupy an episcopal see or their lot be cast in a humble parish.

Many other names [1] would have to be added to those already cited in order to give a just idea of Anglican activity in these years. Religious prose was enriched by the sermons of Robert Sanderson; by the penetrating mysticism of Thomas Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations*, which remained in manuscript until they were recently published together with his remarkable verses; by the biblical criticism and pure and simple sermons of Henry Hammond; by John Hales's *Golden Remains*; and by a *History of the Reformation* (1661) by Peter Heylyn, an aggressive and acrimonious controversialist who wrote a history (published in 1656) of his travels in 1625 in France, a work without sympathy for the people described, but pungent and picturesque. William Chillingworth's *Religion of Protestants* (1638) made more noise, as did, in

[1] Thomas Traherne, *Centuries of Meditations*, ed. Dobell (1908); John Hales, *Works*, ed. Dalrymple, 3 vols. (1765); W. Chillingworth, *Works* (Oxford, 1838); *Eikon Basilike*, ed. E. Almack (1903); P. Heylyn, *Ecclesia Restaurata*, ed. J. C. Robertson (1849)

1649, the famous *Eikon Basilike, the Portraiture of His Sacre[d] Majesty in his solitudes and sufferings* This last book probably the work of John Gauden, ... Charles I himself. It made the house of Stuart with an ... merits ...

4 ...

no ...

who from the beginning ... ...uritans were even trivial coarseness marked their pamphlets in the reign of Elizabeth and figured also in Prynne's exposition of the case against the theatres, his *Histriomastix* of 1632, in many attacks on episcopacy, and, above all, in several of Milton's treatises. While Anglican prose was generally characterized by suavity and unction, Puritan prose was predominantly harsh. Jeremy Taylor and Milton present, in this respect, a typical antithesis But an exception must be made in favour of moderate Presbyterians, like the five writers who signed their anti-Episcopalian treatise with the name Smectymnuus, made up of their combined initials Their group was headed by Stephen Marshall (1594-1655) and Edmund Calamy (1600–66), who were dignified in controversy. The same moderation distinguishes the considerable works of Richard Baxter (1615-91),[1] the most prolific of the prose-writers, whose *Saints' Everlasting Rest* (1650) is a classic of religious literature, and whose *Reliquiæ* is an inexhaustible mine of information on the ecclesiastical history of the period His simple style is neither brilliant nor nervous, yet much superior to that of his contemporary, John Owen (1616–83), who has been called the greatest of the Puritan theologians, but is in truth a writer of diffuse and unattractive prose

The controversy gives the impression that the Puritans conducted it with violence and fierceness because of the extent to which it is dominated by Milton's[2] genius The numerous pamphlets in English which the great poet composed in his middle age, from 1641 to 1660, form the most extraordinary monument of the prose of the middle seventeenth century.

[1] Works, ed. by Rogers, 4 vols (1863)

[2] Complete works of John Milton, 18 vols (Columbia University Press, 1931), prose works, ed J. A St John, 5 vols (Bohn's Library, 1814–53), *Prose of Milton*, ed. R. Garnett (1894, an excellent selection). See A Geffroy, *Étude sur les pamphlets politiques et religieux de Milton* (1848) For other studies editions of poetical works, and lives, see *infra*, p 567, n

A study of his contemporaries proves these treatises to be characteristic rather of the man than of his time, but very great writers are privileged to set their mark on their age, and to think of Puritan literature is at once to remember the name and work of Milton.

His case is peculiar. He was a poet, believing profoundly in his destiny as a poet and despising prose, when he deemed it his duty to leave the studies properly his on one side and to plunge into the thick of the fight, where he remained until its conclusion. Before this episode he rhymed *L'Allegro*, after it he sang *Paradise Lost*. But between the ages of thirty and fifty he gave up verse almost entirely, which meant to him that he renounced his glory. His descent into 'the cool element of prose' was the greatest sacrifice he could make to his cause. 'I should not,' he says, 'choose this manner of writing, wherein, knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand.'

The change was painful as a mutilation to this incomparable artist in verse. The strong force of lyricism which was in him troubled the style of his pamphlets, when it was no longer contained by art, and made his prose unique and very curious, its faults as excessive as its beauties.

The pamphlets, each consequent on an incident of the political and religious struggle, have a narrow and special character. Their subjects are often out of date, so little interesting to the modern reader that they would be neglected were it not that they contain Milton's numerous self-revelations, scraps of information about his life and ideas, and also some magnificently eloquent passages.

He first fought in the ranks of the Presbyterians and against the prelacy in pages in which the coarsest sarcasms about his adversaries alternate with the superb flights to which he is impelled when he speaks of his poetic mission.

After his wife had left him, his puissant egoism caused him to write four successive treatises in favour of divorce. In these he scornfully upbraids custom to which most men are slaves, and from his own unfortunate experience he deduces immediately the necessity of abolishing the marriage law. His marriage has been a failure; hence the institution of matrimony is, in its existing state, evil. There is no true marriage save the union of souls. Milton describes the despair of persons unhappily married. He has recourse to the

ancient parable of Eros and Anteros, love and its con
which falsely resembles it, to show that even virtuous
may be deceived by appearances. A loveless marria
'nothing but the empty husk of an outside matrimon
undelightful and unpleasing to God as any other kir
hypocrisy.' The Bible admits and counsels divorce,
man's law is therefore impious when it forbids it, ar
condemns Christians 'to grind in the mill of an undeli
and servile copulation . . . oft-times with such a yoke-fe
from whom both love and peace, both nature and rel
mourns to be separated.'

Milton does not desire the intervention of the law, but
siders that it falls to the head of a family to decree a div

and Roman, and he supports his thesis with arguments t
from the pagans as well as from the Jews. He quotes a sa
of Paulus Aemilius He considers only men's interest, a

that it becomes anarchy. The memory of his sufferin

he recounts the dangers of an unhappy marriage, gr
for the young and very pure man, quite ignorant of wo
than for the rake who is more informed and better a
for his own defence.

In these treatises, which assume the form of a propos
a law, the cry of a disappointed and angry man is disti
heard. Nothing Milton wrote is more characteristic o
haughty and absolute pride.

This campaign had, however, the effect of rendering
suspect to the Presbyterians, his recent allies, who now
the upper hand in Parliament and were imposing

him to publish the most eloquent of his prose works, *Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing* (1644):

Here he appeals both to patriotic pride and to the passion for liberty. He desires that England shall champion the noble cause he advocates, and he has a vision of his country regenerate by the abolition of intellectual tyranny:

> Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her as an eagle muing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam; purging and unscaling her long abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means.

He admits that books acknowledged to be maleficent should be proscribed, but is opposed to censorship as a preventive measure, giving his reasons in a passage as lofty and beautiful as his most famous verses and as lastingly young.

His temperament carried him to extremes, and he next placed his impetuous rhetoric at the service of the Independents. He wrote in justification of the execution of Charles I and replied in *Eikonoklastes* (October 1649) to the *Eikon Basilike* which Charles I was supposed to have written in prison. Then, since the insular quarrel had become European and to be read on the Continent was important, he replied to the learned Saumaise's *Defensio regia* by his Latin *Defensio pro populo Anglicano*, and to Peter du Moulin's attack *Regii Sanguinis clamor ad coelum adversus Parricidas anglicanos*, by his *Defensio secunda*, which was followed by other pamphlets.

At the end of the Commonwealth period he returned to English in order once more to claim liberty of conscience, to demand the suppression of an established and endowed Church, and to protest against the reinstatement of the monarchy. The Restoration put a stop to his polemical career. But he accomplished other prose work during his life, wrote a *Treatise on Education* in 1644 and published a *History of England* in 1670 and a *Brief History of Moscovia*. He also left among his papers a curious Latin manuscript, *De Doctrina Christiana*, in which his own bold and heterodox ideas on Christianity and morality are exposed. He reveals himself an Arian, hostile to the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, and recommends polygamy.

Large as is the part of prose in his literary productions, he

regarded it always as an inferior instrument, useful for practical ends and in controversy. His prose is the improvisation of a humanist, who reserves his art for his verse and is therefore careless of the shape and limits of his sentences. It makes formidable reading. It is best understood when it is read aloud, so that the inflections of spoken words can be followed, as though they had not been confided to print. Yet the troubled vehemence leaves room, here and there, for admirable images and for powerful sarcasm, provoked by enthusiasm or anger. Moreover, Milton constantly reveals himself in his prose. We see the impetuous idealist, scorning the immediate and the real, building up a religion and a republic which might have existed only if all men had been like himself, cut to his measure. He was unquestionably a Puritan, but his outlook is so personal that he often expresses the opinions of no group and is representative only of himself

5. *The Eccentrics. Urquhart, Fuller, Walton*—A certain number of the prose-writers of the middle seventeenth century are difficult to class, because of their subjects and of something individual or even eccentric in their manner There was as yet no literary norm, and fancy still had free play

The most singular of them is certainly the Scot, Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty (1611–60),[1] whose original writings are examples of pedantry, wordiness and grandiloquence, and also of such vanity and vaingloriousness as cannot easily be matched Their mere titles are stupefying—*Trissotetras, Pantochronocanon, Ekskubalauron, Logopandecteision*—and words no less formidable swarm in their text Urquhart had, however, the happy idea of employing his verbal vigour on the translation of Rabelais (1653), and the result was something like a masterpiece—not an exact rendering, but an adaptation which keeps the spirit of the original while the author improves on his model and gaily multiplies the synonyms and epithets of which Rabelais had already been prodigal. Like Rabelais, he makes use of every form of speech—archaisms and neologisms, jargon and slang

Thomas Fuller (1608–61)[2] is predominantly witty and

[1] Works edited for the Maitland Club (1834) The translation of Rabelais as been published in the Tudor Translations, ed Charles Whibley (1900), nd in the World's Classics, 3 vols (1934)

[2] *Church History of Britain*, ed Brewer, 6 vols (1845–8) ... *orthies of England* (reprinted 1840), ... vols. (1891), *Good Thought*... *Collected* ... lley, *Life of Thom*... *Thomas Fuller*, in

pointed. This Anglican clergyman, who served the Royalist cause and wrote *The Church History of Britain* (1655), must yet be placed rather among the antiquaries or the moralists than among the ecclesiastical writers. Of his books, *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642) and *The Worthies of England* (1661) are most read. The former presents a series of model types in various social positions—a good father, a good soldier, a good schoolmaster, a good yeoman and others—with many historical examples. The *Worthies* gives, in the author's fantastic manner, much information about distinguished Englishmen and their birthplaces. It is thanks to Fuller that many significant anecdotes have been preserved, and, although he has collected much gossip, he also shows, in his more specially historical works, a critical understanding of documents which inspires confidence.

An amiable optimism illumines his style, and his love of conceits gives it relief and connects him with the so-called 'metaphysical' poets of his generation. Many of his definitions are still celebrated, for instance that of the good yeoman, who 'is a gentleman in ore, whom the next age may see refined; and is the wax capable of a gentle impression, when the prince shall stamp it'; and that of a negro, the image of God 'cut in ebony,' and also his saying that 'the soldier at the same time shoots out his prayer to God and his pistol at his enemy.' Fuller often sacrifices complete accuracy to pointedness, but in this he has, after all, no other object than to keep the reader alertly attentive to his wise and humane counsels on morality.

No figure in the literature of the period is, however, more endearing than the one still the most popular, Izaak Walton (1593–1683),[1] who is outside all the categories. His long life prolonged the Elizabethan age to the Restoration. He is a link between Marlowe and Dryden. Almost without literary education and never intended for a writer, he long kept an ironmonger's shop in Fleet Street. But even so he was attracted by the intellectuals. He was the parishioner and humble friend of John Donne, knew Drayton and Ben Jonson, often went fishing with the scholarly ambassador Wotton, and was frequently in the society of the wits and also, since he was a good Anglican, of the divines. All his life he kept a love for

[1] *The Compleat Angler*, ed. A. Lang (1896), Le Gallienne (1897), Buchan (1901), etc.; *The Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, George Herbert*, ed. Bullen 1884), A. Dobson, in 2 vols. (1895), Saintsbury (World's Classics, 1927). See also S. Martin, *Izaak Walton and his Friends* (1904).

poetry such as he knew in his youth, for its mingled grace, strangeness, and artifice, and more than once he inserts verse in his simple and homely prose. In 1640 he had written his life of Donne, but it was mainly during the leisure he enjoyed after he retired from trade in 1643 that he developed a taste for relating his impression and memories.

He is a delightful biographer. To his life of Donne he added those of Sir Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, and George Herbert, all of which were collected in one volume in 1670. Their charm is partly due to the fact that Walton wrote lives only of men for whom he had a liking and with whom he was to some extent familiar. He was, indeed, a mere child when Hooker died, but he had ties with those who knew the great divine well. Nor had he ever more than a glimpse of Herbert, but the two had friends in common. Thus it is that all Walton's biographies have a charm of intimacy. He had, moreover, heartiness and simplicity of

[illegible]

has been raised whether his style is merely his natural form of expression or [illegible]
should be disc[illegible]
but he had t[illegible]
with men of letters, even refined men of letters, whom he had known in his youth It was his singular good fortune to love their mannerism and not to be infected by it. A very lively inclination took him to the poets and he was, in his hour, a poet himself. In *The Compleat Angler* we see him trying to recall songs which once had pleased him When memory fails, when a verse escapes him, he puts down his rod and, reclining on the grass, spends an hour on remaking the forgotten lines. His invention and his memory collaborate.

[illegible]

reached us Without him, we should hardly know the characters of the eminent men of whom he speaks, and the loss to us would be great. It is, however, he himself, with his gentle religion and serene philosophy, who even here interests us most.

His optimism is even more apparent in his *Compleat Angler*, which has become a classic. Few books of this time have gone through as many editions and are more read and as much loved to-day. Walton put into it not only his large experience of fishing, but also the reflection of his nature and the secret of his happiness. It is perhaps the only handbook of an art or craft which ranks as literature, and it seems to have won its place without seeking it.

The respectable pleasure which Walton takes in fishing turns into universal optimism and thanksgiving to God for the benefits lavished on the earth. How easily a wholesome and delightful life can be led on the banks of a cool 'gliding stream' on fine summer days! What madness to join in the rush for money or pleasure! How perfect life would be if all men were anglers and had anglers' souls! Every one else seems to be obstinately shunning the only true joys to be had here below.

It should be noted that this book appeared in 1653, on the morrow of the Civil War, when the country laboured under Cromwell's yoke and all Walton's friends were in the camp of the vanquished. He was sixty years old; he had lost his first wife and the seven children she had borne him. But public and private ills left no trace on the angler's smiling spirit, any more than the tortures he inflicted on the poor frogs he used as bait altered his benign countenance or modified the unction of his advice to his pupil. His joy in life was even distilled into kind words concerning those small victimized reptiles.

Walton was, but for this, the best fellow in the world. His joy was always inspired by love for the fields and the streams or by the rhymes which sang in his memory, and it was accompanied by a strong preference for decency in which there was no taint of sullen prudery. We can understand his attraction for the huntsman whom he met accidentally and converted to his ruling passion, winning him from the more brutal joys of his own form of sport, and to whom he passed on his morality, that of a man as averse from austerity as from gross self-indulgence.

This book, which has the form of a dialogue between the angler and his pupil, is a transformed pastoral. Here and there the factitious element in the older pastorals subsists, and can be recognized in some entirely poetic locutions, but these are excusable on the lips of an old man mindful of the ornate expressions which charmed his adolescence. Elsewhere all is

The excellent Walton, sincerely pious and moral, makes it
his duty to savour
homage for them
tuous and purified.
and the land, the sunlight and the warm summer showers.

Merry England, and he made its spirit survive into the gloomiest and most morose period of English history. He kept for himself a fresh and sweet retreat from the political storms. He was no hero, but a sage endowed by fate with a lively taste for nature, a grateful soul, and an excellent stomach.

6. *Other Writers of Prose*.—The middle seventeenth century can claim other prose works in several *genres*. England, later than France, produced memoirs: the *Autobiography* of Lord Herbert of Cherbury (1588–1648), who also wrote a history
(1603-6
which r
names,

e addition to this list of the
inson, by his wife, and the
Royalist *Life of the Duke of Newcastle*, by his second wife.

Puritan allegorist. Here we have only to mark the wealth of the period which is our subject by naming the writers who

opposition to the absolute monarchy advocated by Hobbes. But Harrington's political romance lacks the imaginative qualities proper to its *genre*, those which Thomas More could

so brilliantly impart. Moreover, although it is full of the reflections of an experienced and sagacious man, its style is dull, and it has not the astonishing structural force and verbal exactness which made Hobbes a precursor and a pioneer of modern prose.

This period could also lay claim to the learned John Selden (1584-1654), whose legal treatises are almost all in Latin, but whose table-talk, collected and published by his secretary in 1689, long after his death, delighted the classical age with its abundant good sense and occasional discreet irony. The Civil War also synchronized with the beginning of the career of Henry More (1614-87), the most celebrated of the Cambridge Platonists. He wrote, first in verse and then in prose and both in English and in Latin, a series of works which bear the imprint of a dreamy mysticism not far removed from occultism, and are accessible only to a few initiates, so that they are in contrast to the practical and earthbound literature of the age in which the author ended his life.

CHAPTER II

POETRY FROM 1625 TO 1660

1. *Long Poems which were Failures.*—At the death of James I, in 1625, Spenser's influence was almost exhausted, surviving only in Milton. It was Ben Jonson and especially John Donne who now had disciples and imitators Poets were numerous down to the Restoration, but, except for Milton, they were the poets of the anthologies whose memory lives only in slight lyrics or collections of small poems[1] The ambition to write works on a vast scale had not died out, but the efforts to realize it were failures The epical ambition which was then common to Europe, and which produced more than one pitifully abortive poem in France, was no more successful in England Long romances in verse and attempts at classical epics constitute what is dead in the literature of the time, their titles and the names of almost all their authors are forgotten They have been collected only by the historical zeal of the present day,[2] and to name them will sufficiently show how abundant was the production in this unfortunate *genre*

They consist of metrical romances, like Patrick Hannay's *Sheretine and Mariana* (1622), the *Leoline and Sydanis* (1642) of Sir Francis Kynaston, who had previously modernized Chaucer's *Troylus and Criseyde*, and W Chamberlayne's *Pharonnida*, in six books (1659) There are also mythological narratives: Shackerley Marmion's *Cupid and Psyche* (1637) and William Bosworth's *Arcadius and Sepha* (1651), long religious narratives like Edward Benlowes's *Theophila*, in nine cantos (1652), and epics like D'Avenant's *Gondibert* (1650), which is in quatrains, and Cowley's *Davideis* (1656), which is classical in manner and has a Hebrew theme

[1] E. Gosse, *Seventeenth Century Studies* (1883), B Wendell *The Seventeenth Century in English Literature* (1904) Collections of verse *Cavalier and Courtier Lyrists* (Canterbury Poets, 1891), G. Saintsbury, *Seventeenth Century Lyrists* (undated), H J Massingham, *A Treasury of Seventeenth Century English Verse* (1919), H J C Grierson, *Metaphysical Lyrics and Poems of the Seventeenth Century* (1921)

[2] *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, ed Saintsbury, 3 vols (Clarendon Press, 1905-21)

Inevitably poetic qualities and readable passages are scattered here and there in these ambitious works, but on the whole they were stillborn, and have no importance in literary history save that a path leads over their graves to Milton's *Paradise Lost.*

If dead poetry be left on one side, and the attempt be then made to classify the poets of the middle seventeenth century, they are seen to fall into two main groups, separated by the differences which make the history of this troubled period. There are first the secular poets, all in the Royalist ranks and therefore known as Cavaliers, and secondly there are religious poets, subdivided into the Anglicans and the Puritans. The division is social rather than literary, but it is simple and convenient, and corresponds sufficiently to the diversity of inspiration.

2. *Thomas Carew (1598?–1639).*[1]—The poet who first, before the Civil War, showed what the spirit of the Cavaliers was to be, and first was affected by the combined influence of Jonson and Donne, was Thomas Carew, a gentleman of the court of Charles I who was a reputed wit. He was a courtly and polished love-poet whom his rivals suspected of working long at his elegant verses. The logical good order of the classicists rules his mind even when, in his poems to Celia, he returns to a theme of the Petrarchists. He can isolate a thought, follow it up faithfully and balance its several parts, and many of his light sets of verses have won, in consequence, a place in anthologies. He has little sensibility—he had indeed a reputation for dryness—but his sensual ardour enables him to avoid the coldness of gallantry. Such, in any case, is the character betrayed by his longest poem and his masterpiece, *The Rapture,* unfortunately no less indecent than the verses of Aretino. It is an invitation to Celia to flout 'the Giant Honour' and enjoy forbidden pleasures without scruple. The paradise he paints to her is one of the most licentious even of those inspired by the Italian Renascence. His attack on honour recalls Sidney's *Astrophel* and especially Donne's *Elegies.* He is also inspired by the speeches of Petronius in the anonymous tragedy *Nero* (Act IV, sc. vii), but in libertine audacity he outdoes his models.

Carew is connected with Donne by the fine elegy with which he honoured his memory. The poem has more feeling than

[1] *Poems of Thomas Carew,* ed. Ebsworth (1893); ed. Vincent (Muses' Library, 1899).

is customary with Carew and is, moreover, one of th pieces of criticism written in this period. No one has p out more accurately than Carew what was new in Donn contempt for outworn ornament and his need of pe and virile expression. Yet Donne left few traces up style. If Carew has none of the master's flashes of g [illegible] In his commend [illegible] gorous and [illegible], after trans [illegible] lated the P [illegible] the holy plac [illegible] 'devout pen of old,' stays 'humbly waiting at the porch,' listening sacred strains. Yet he thinks that one day his eyes,

> *Now hunting glow-worms, may adore the sun,*

and that:

> *My eyes in penitential dew may steep*
> *That brine which they for sensual love did weep.*

The poem is beautiful, and so restrained that it sincere. It is consistent with Clarendon's account poet's edifying death.

His was, however, a death-bed conversion. All his is the work of an amorist, such as Milton despised. He 'persuasions' to love, madrigals, complaints and repro addressed to a mistress, lines to his 'inconstant mistress shall be 'damned for her false apostasy,' to Celia singi Celia when he sends her red and white roses:

> In the white you may discover
> The paleness of a fainting lover;
> In the red, the flames still feeding
> On my heart with fresh wounds bleeding.

In the famous song, *Ask me no more*, he finds all the be of nature united in his mistress—the rose of June:

> For in your beauties, orient deep,
> These flowers, as in their causes, sleep;

the 'golden atoms of the day' which 'enrich her hair nightingale's song:

> For in your sweet dividing throat,
> She winters, and keeps warm her note.

The theme is commonplace, but in the harmonious qua of this song it is turned with perfect elegance.

Carew's work is slight, much distilled, but some warmth of imagination and a certain fancy temper its coldness. The style and the versification are so polished that Waller and Denham, the acknowledged pioneers of the classical school, could hardly improve on them.

3. *The Cavalier Poets.*—Carew is the typical court poet. Sir John Suckling (1609–42) [1] typifies the Cavaliers, their loyalty, dash, petulancy, frivolity, easy morals, and wit. Rich, spendthrift, valiant, a gamester and a gallant, an amateur of the drama who wrote four not unsuccessful plays, and a faithful admirer of Shakespeare, Suckling mocked at the pains which Carew took to polish his verses. He was himself an improviser, one whose work is very unequal but who writes with irresistible swing. It is his light, impertinent tone which characterizes him. He recalls Donne when he rallies woman on her capriciousness or himself on his inconstancy; but while he has the master's hyperbole he leaves his metaphysics alone. He discharges his mockery in the form of little, swiftly moving, neatly turned songs, irony sometimes hiding the madrigal, as in *Out upon it.* His ease and flippancy are French rather than English, and it has been thought that a sojourn which he made in France before he was twenty influenced his muse. Less slight than the rest of his work is the *Ballad upon a Wedding* in which a farmer describes, in picturesque language, a wedding at which he has been present. Here there are many lively and homely descriptive touches, as well as wit and spirit. Suckling puts new life and freshness into the conventional epithalamium. Not until Thomas Moore did any one else show such skill at writing charming verses about nothing. 'Natural, easy Suckling,' as Congreve's Millamant calls him, whose life was short and who versified only as a pastime, had a considerable production. Beneath his apparent frivolity there was, as his poems prove, romantic generosity, and even, as his letter to Henry Jermyn shows, a power of reflecting on politics. His treatise, *An Account of Religion by Reason*, in which he combats the Socinian heresies, is proof that he also cared for religion. The contrasts in him are characteristic of a time in which libertinage often rubbed shoulders with piety.

Richard Lovelace (1618–58) [2] was neither so correct as

[1] *Poems, Plays and Other Remains of Sir John Suckling*, ed. Hazlitt, 2 vols. (1892): *The Works of Sir John Suckling*, ed. Thompson (1910).
[2] *Poems*, ed. C. H. Wilkinson, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1925); 1 vol. (ibid., 1930).

Carew nor so natural as Suckling. This most hands
Cavalier whose figure fascinated the ladies, this fait
follower of the king who was twice imprisoned and fi
ruined for the cause, so that he ended his short life in the
abject poverty, was a very unequal poet. In his *Lu*
(1649) the cold, hyperbolical compliments of the degene
sonneteers occur side by side with Donne's obscure extr
gance. The lack of art in his work is as apparent a
mannerisms, and almost all of it has been forgotten.
it was his fortune to make two or three songs in whicl
sense of honour is in manly alliance with his love. It wa
who wrote to Althea from prison:

> Stone walls do not a prison make,
>   Nor iron bars a cage,
> Minds innocent and quiet take
>   That for an hermitage
> If I have freedom in my love,
>   And in my soul am free,
> Angels alone that soar above
>   Enjoy such liberty

It was he who wrote 'to Lucasta on going to the wars

> I could not love thee, dear, so much,
>   Loved I not honour more

This satirist, with his rude style, often, while turning
epigram, wrote such isolated couplets as Dryden affe
and in spite of his metaphysical strangeness he blazed

[1] Edited by Saintsbury in *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, vol. iii

This poem has become the classic of all the English songs on May.

But Herrick's truest imprint is on that multitude of tiny poems which seem to be made of a breath of air—charming madrigals, love-fancies, addresses to flowers, brief epitaphs. The light joy of a frivolous heart, a fancy pleased by whatever has grace or beauty; the tenuous melancholy of a reveller who remembers how ephemeral is that which charms him: such are his moods, and to the latter of them he returns again and again as he watches the flowers in his garden—the roses, the daffodils, the blossoms of the fruit-trees, the meadows which 'have been fresh and green' and are left 'to lament.' The essence of this mood is in a trifle about cherry-blossoms:

Ye may simper, blush and smile,
And perfume the air awhile;
But, sweet things, ye must be gone;
Fruit, ye know, is coming on;
Then, ah! then, where is your grace,
Whenas cherries come in place?

Never again did a poet of the West have so light a touch. The secret seems to be kept by Japan or China.

His epitaphs are endlessly graceful. They do not weigh down the graves on which they are but poised with the delicate grace of flowers, for instance this upon a child:

Virgins promised when I died
That they would each primrose-tide
Duly, morn and evening, come,
And with flowers dress my tomb.
Having promised, pay your debts,
Maids, and here strew violets.

When this voluptuary was in bed with fever he called on music to dispel his pain:

Then make me weep
My pains asleep;
And give me such reposes
That I, poor I,
May think thereby
I live and die
'Mongst roses.

Everywhere his simplicity is seasoned with a strangeness—*Mad Maid's Song, Grace for a Child, The Night-piece, to Julia.* He is inspired by the Anthology and by Jonson, who made had fine translations from it; but while Jonson took extreme pains, Herrick seems to sing spontaneously. He can be reminiscent,

recalling Marlowe's pastoral or Shakespeare's fairies or Herbert's pious verses, but whatever he takes is transposed and … La Fontaine's otherwise just verdict

He is the most epicurean of the moderns. His life, in the time of the Civil War and so near to Milton, seems a defiance. His metres, fluid as water, and his delicately varied stanzas, are surprising in their proximity to regularized verse, to the couplet which Waller and Denham fixed and stabilized and which increasingly became the vehicle of didacticism. Herrick, born in the Elizabethan age, was in the succeeding period the perfect artist in slight verse, while Milton, with his sovereign art, reigned over grander poetry.

5. *The Anglican and Catholic Poets.*—Herrick, a pagan clergyman, represents no more than the lax Anglicanism of his time. The renewal of faith within the Catholic Church,

their stimulated zeal on the prose of preachers and controversialists, and it also left its mark on poetry. Hooker had exemplified Anglican weightiness and the Anglican grasp of political principles. In the seventeenth century the ardour of many Anglicans reached even to mysticism The pious fervour shown under James I by the brothers Phineas and Giles Fletcher became widespread under Charles I and during the persecutions of the Commonwealth. Reason became the

towards a renewal of monastic asceticism, was combined with a taste for the metaphysical element in the sometimes truly beautiful and always curious writings of such as Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, and Traherne.

Such short poems as *The Pulley* and *The Collar* are moving in their strangeness.

In the latter the poet cries out at the restraints his piety imposes on him:

> Sure there was wine
> Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn
> Before my tears did drown it.

He determined that he will 'suit and serve his need':

> But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild
> At every word,
> Methought I heard one calling, 'Child';
> And I replied, 'My Lord.'

There is great power in the poem in which he apostrophizes Death:

> Death, thou wast once an uncouth hideous thing,
> Nothing but bones.

Now Death has lost its sting:

> But since our Saviour's death did put some blood
> Into thy face,
> Thou art grown fair and full of grace,
> Much in request, much sought for, as a good.

Nothing is more stimulating than to read these short poems, which are so much alive, so strange, and so weighted with meaning, their faults of taste redeemed by their flashes of poetry.

(*b*) CRASHAW.—Richard Crashaw (1612–49),[1] who was almost twenty years younger than Herbert and a great admirer of *The Temple*, did not remain within the Anglican fold. When he was about thirty-three he became a Catholic, and he ended his life in Rome as secretary to Cardinal Palotta. He began by writing the verses of an amorist and humanist. While still at the university, he was an expert Latin poet. To the models of antiquity he added models taken from Spain and Italy, for he fell under the spell of the colour, the exaltation, and the melody of the poetry of these southern countries. He was attracted not only by these glowing qualities, but also by the extravagant preciosity of such as Marini and the ardours of the Spanish mystics. It is after their fashion rather than Donne's that he is metaphysical.

[1] *Poems English, Latin, and Greek*, ed. L. C. Martin (Oxford, 1927); *Poems*, ed. A. W. Waller (Cambridge, 1904). See Mario Praz, *Secentismo e marinismo in Inghilterra* (Florence, 1925); Joan Bennett, *Four Metaphysical Poets* (Cambridge, 1934).

The first collection of his poems to be published after his death was called *Delights of the Muses*, and includes a celebrated translation or rather paraphrase of a poem by a Jesuit [illegible]

[illegible]

share of Crashaw's enthusiasm and what may be called his voluptuous exaltation. He published in 1646 a collection of poems written before his conversion and called *Steps to the Temple*. In this he translates, under the title *Sospetto d'Herode*, [illegible]

[illegible] together with many others invented by the poet, all transposed into a religious key. Cruel outrages on taste alternate with admirable poetic visions. Of Magdalen, he says, 'upwards thou dost weep,' because her tears go to heaven:

> Every morn from hence
> [illegible]
>
> Ther [illegible]
> Tast [illegible]
>
> When some new bright guest
> Takes up among the stars a room,
> And Heaven will make a feast,
> Angels with their bottles come;
> And draw from these full eyes of thine,
> Their master's water, their own wine

But how he compensates by his vision of the saint's grieving countenance:

> Not in the evening's eyes,
> When they red with weeping are,
> For the Sun that dies,
> Sits sorrow with a face so fair,

Nowhere but here did ever meet
Sweetness so sad, sadness so sweet.

Sadness, all the while
She sits in such a throne as this,
Can do nought but smile,
Nor believe she sadness is;
Gladness itself would be more glad
To be made so sweetly sad.

While yet an Anglican, Crashaw conceived ardent veneration for Saint Teresa, and he returned to her as a Catholic in order to write his most magnificent hymn, *The Flaming Heart, upon the Book and Picture of the Seraphical Saint Teresa.* The flight of holy love which ends this poem is perhaps the most ardent product of English religious poetry.

Crashaw's faults are conspicuous and not one of his poems is exempt from them. There is not one which can be quoted from end to end without offending taste by some absurdity. Although Herbert abounded in conceits, several of his numerous poems are free from them. But Crashaw scattered them everywhere. Yet he possessed certain properly poetic qualities in higher degree than Herbert. While he was less intellectual than the former poet, and while his language was less simple and precise, he had more warmth, colour, and harmony. His lyric flights have been equalled only by Shelley. By the strangeness and obscurity of his poetry and the flashes which light it up, and by the frequently charming and invariably melodious lack of precision in his style, he has curious analogies with the best of the recent symbolists. His poems are approximations to thought, full of music and imagery.

(c) VAUGHAN.—Unequality is also a characteristic of the verses of Henry Vaughan (1622–95),[1] the mystical Welsh doctor who was born in the land of the ancient Silurians and liked to call himself a Silurist. He began by writing secular poetry which betrays Ben Jonson's influence—*Olor Iscanus*, finished in 1647; but an illness detached him from the world and turned his thoughts to spiritual things. He became impregnated with the poetry of George Herbert and imitated him, writing *Silex Scintillans*, which appeared in two parts in 1650 and 1655. He is perhaps the seventeenth-century poet who has been most scorned and who most surprisingly recovered his place in the public estimation. His verses were

[1] *Poems*, ed. Chambers 2 vols. (1896, reprinted 1905); ed. L. C. Martin, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1915). See E. Blunden, *On the Poems of Henry Vaughan* (1927); Elizabeth Holmes, *Henry Vaughan and the Hermetic Philosophy* (Oxford, 1932).

long taken to typify the obscure, the platitudinous, an
inharmoniously rude.

As we pass from one to another of his poems, we also ch
from absolute blame to supreme praise. Only a few
indubitable value, but these are pure gold. In them Vau
is more melodious than Herbert, his mysticism is more
and less argumentative and his imagination is mello
He prays not in a church like Herbert, but in the open
His own picturesque country has inspired him with love
nature, and this feeling mingles with his Christian medi
tions and imparts to the best of his work something which
romantic and modern. Vaughan has a hermit's soul. T
large number of his poems which are too directly inspired
Herbert are usually inferior to their model. He lacks th
art to construct even a few stanzas, nor can he conclude
poem. His versification is far less skilful and varied tha
Herbert's, and almost always his verses read like an im
provisation, often an awkward one. But his meditations or
life and death, in the face of changing nature, are graced by
new images. There is, for instance, a poem in which he tells
that he has lost one dear to him and his heart is heavy. He
walks in a field

> Where I sometimes had seen the soil to yield
> A gallant flower,
> But winter now had ruffled all the bower.

Then he digs in the soil:

> And by and by
> I saw the warm recluse alone to lie,
> Where fresh and green
> He lived of us unseen.

The poet weeps upon the earthy bed:

> Then sighing whispered, 'Happy are the dead!
> What peace doth now
> Rock him asleep below!'

He then prays that he may again see him whom he mourns.

On another day he meditates before a waterfall, of which
the 'transparent, cool, and watery wealth' falls,

> As if his liquid, loose retinue stayed
> Lingering, and were of this steep place afraid,
> The common pass
> Where, clear as glass,
> All must descend
> Not to an end.

But quickened by this deep and rocky grave,
Rise to a longer course more bright and brave.

The waterfall is to him a symbol of life and death.

It is part of his originality that he felt the poetry of childhood. His *Retreat* anticipates Wordsworth's famous *Ode on Intimations of Immortality*. It is with the same regret for vanished glory and purity that Vaughan reverts to his childhood:

Happy those early days when I
Shined in my angel infancy!
Before I understood this place
Appointed for my second race,
Or taught my soul to fancy aught
But a white, celestial thought;
When yet I had not walked above
A mile or two from my first love,
And looking back, at that short space,
Could see a glimpse of his bright face.

The whole poem is exquisite; it has not a discord. Yet it is perhaps not here, but in the poem which begins, 'They are all gone into the world of light,' that Vaughan reaches artistic perfection, is happiest in his choice of rhythms and images:

I see them walking in an air of glory,
Whose light doth trample on my days:
My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,
Mere glimmering and decays.

Despised though Vaughan was by his contemporaries, at least his glorification of childhood was emulated by Thomas Traherne,[1] who was born about 1634 and whose poetry and prose, up to a few years ago (1903), existed only in manuscript. Traherne's poems are, for the most part, inartistic, yet include some admirable achievements, like *The Wonder*, which express a child's wonder at the body in which his soul is lodged and the world into which he is transported. Traherne continues Anglican mystical poetry down to the Restoration.

(*d*) Other Religious Poets.—We have to go back a little in order to make room for the Catholic poet William Habington (1605–54), a pupil of the Jesuits of Saint-Omer who wrote verses of pure love to Castara, telling like beads his metaphysical fancies, which would be more excusable in a more imaginative and passionate poet.

There is more to interest in Francis Quarles (1592–1644), an Anglican with Puritan tendencies and a man of the world converted to piety, who published, amidst other work, his

[1] Poetical works ed. G. L. Wade (1932). Study by Q. Iredale (Oxford, 1935).

very popular *Emblemes* in 1635. He was an improviser, almost a journalist in verse. The *Emblemes* are a series of ... ble and ... Hugo, a ... medita-tion, and his metrical commentary is very often common-place. His language is frank and while not less extravagant is less obscure than that of his contemporary poets. Since he appeals to the great mass of readers, he banishes very rare words from his vocabulary and over-refinement from his style. Even his bad taste is within everybody's reach. He is a metaphysical poet for the many.

6 *Puritan Poetry. Marvell.*—The Puritans also had their songsters, who, while they were less numerous than those of the other party, included one of the most endearing and another, much the greatest of the poets of the century—Marvell and Milton.

It is impossible not to place among the Puritans Andrew Marvell (1621–78),[1] who under the Commonwealth was tutor to the daughter of Lord Fairfax, the great Parliamentary general, and who subsequently was Milton's friend and with him secretary to the Privy Council. He was the most inspired and affectionate of Cromwell's panegyrists, and after the ...

alight, as they are, with human love and feeling for nature. Even in the poems of his maturity and in his pamphleteer's prose the gaiety is apparent of a jovial and mirth-loving spirit. On the whole, religion has far less place in Marvell's verses than in those of the Anglicans we have just considered. While he wrote many verses which witness to the sincerity

... vols (Oxford, 1927); for the ... Grosart's *Complete Works*, ... ell (English Men of Letters ... *patriote* (1928).

of his faith, he made both more numerous and finer poems filled with the joyous humanism and the cordial, vital quality which prove him a son of the Renascence. Undoubtedly he revered the Bible, but he also loved wine, women, and song.

He wrote his essentially poetic works at Nunappleton, Lord Fairfax's country-seat, where he lived from 1650 to 1652. He is inspired by the country, but not, like earlier poets, by the country seen in accordance with the pastoral convention. The desire for a more precise, for a local poetry, was already making itself felt, and one of the first poems which fulfilled it was John Denham's *Cooper's Hill.* But while a landscape was to Denham no more than the starting-point for historical and moral reflections, Marvell indulged far more fully in the happy contemplation of natural scenery. Before him only Wither had expressed, amid much rubbish, the intimate enjoyment he drew from fields and woods. Marvell spontaneously returned to this theme which was to be so dear to the Lake poets. He is very Wordsworthian in *Upon the Hill and Grove at Billborough*, in which he describes a sort of natural terrace whither Fairfax, after his retirement, was wont to resort in search of quiet and of a meditative mood.

Marvell relates his own feelings in the longest of his poems, *Upon Appleton House*, in which he shows that he is familiar with the aspects of the country and its trees and birds, and that he has studied and compared the songs of birds. He anticipates Wordsworth in preferring the song of the dove to that of the nightingale. As he walks, he can

> . . . through the hazels thick espy
> The hatching throstle's shining eye,

and watch the woodpecker at work. He almost identifies himself with the birds and growing things:

> Thus I, easy philosopher,
> Among the birds and trees confer;
> And little now to make me wants
> Or of the fowls, or of the plants.

He has dialogues with the singing birds. The leaves trembling in the wind are to him Sibyl's leaves:

> What Rome, Greece, Palestine, ere said,
> I in this light mosaic read.
> Thrice happy he who, not mistook,
> Hath read in Nature's mystic book.

To be covered with leaves is a delight to him:

> Under this antic cope I move,
> Like some great prelate of the grove

He calls upon the leafy shoots to cling to him:

> Bind me, ye woodbines, in your twines,
> Curl me about, ye gadding vines.

This is the exalted love for nature of a romantic, but a hint

him that all creation is

> Annihilating all that 's made
> To a green thought in a green shade.

Marvell's *Garden* foreshadows Keats by its

into poems which are otherwise inspired, by Christianity or by love, nowhere better than in the famous song of the emigrants in Bermuda. Here Marvell imagines that he hears

'safe from the storms' and prelates' rage':

> He hangs in shades the orange bright
> Like golden lamps in a green night,
> And does in the pomegranates close
> Jewels more rich than Ormus shows.

Sometimes Marvell returns to the pastoral, but he gives it a new emphasis of truth, even of realism. The short idyll *Ametas and Thestylis making Hay-ropes* is very original and graceful, and there is also the touching complaint of *Damon the Mower*, who, working beneath a burning sun, laments his Juliana's hardness of heart.

Love poems are not numerous in Marvell's work, but among

several which are graceful (*The Gallery*) or slightly ironical—denouncing woman's tricks, artifices, and coquetry (*Mourning*, *Daphnis and Chloe*)—a few hold us by their passion. His lines *To his Coy Mistress* have Donne's strength and passion without his obscurity or bad taste, and run easily and harmoniously. They are the masterpiece of metaphysical poetry in this *genre*, and they also show a return to the anacreontic theme, 'Gather ye rosebuds while ye may.' But it is repeated with a new intensity. It issues from a heart truly deep and passionate, and the love which is demanded is silent and forceful:

> Now let us sport us while we may,
> And now, like am'rous birds of prey,
> Rather at once our time devour,
> Than languish in his slow-chapt pow'r.
> Let us roll all our strength and all
> Our sweetness up into one ball,
> And tear our pleasures with rough strife
> Thorough the iron gates of life.
> Thus, though we cannot make our sun
> Stand still, yet we will make him run.

These lines are the very essence of the poetry of Marvell, that strange, sensuous, passionate Puritan. He had, however, another vein. He was an ardent patriot, and patriotism rather than piety may be said to have dictated his verses on Cromwell's protectorate and death. It is the dominant note of his *Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland* (1560), *First Anniversary of the Government under His Highness the Lord Protector* (1655), and *Poem upon the Death of His late Highness the Lord Protector.* A sort of competition of poets, in which such as Waller and Dryden took part, was provoked by the great man's death, and Marvell carried off its prize because in his verses the man speaks through the poet. They are penetrated with emotion. Better than the others, Marvell gives the impression of the greatness of him he sang and the immensity of the loss his death occasioned.

After the Restoration Marvell pursued only the art of satire, in prose and verse, and this phase of his accomplishment is better studied elsewhere. We have said enough to show how far he was original as a pure poet. Nature endowed him richly: his sincerity and straightness of vision sufficed to raise the metaphysical school, to which he belonged, from its state of decline, and to bring it back from extravagance to reason without alienating fancy. In the history of

[illegible]

varied and inventive poets of his time. To rank among the greatest, he should have had a more exacting standard of art; and perhaps a more whole-hearted devotion to poetry, as well as those supreme qualities of mastery of the word and the line which are the glory of the other Puritan poet, John Milton.

7. The Precursors of the Classicists. (a) ABRAHAM COWLEY.—Of the poets of the middle seventeenth century, a few are a link between the past and the present, between the Renascence and modern times. Their merits should be considered relatively rather than absolutely. Their interest has [illegible]

In their first rank is Abraham Cowley (1618–67),[1] who was the most famous of them in his lifetime, enjoying a greater reputation not only than Herrick, who was almost unknown, but even than Milton. Milton himself considered that Cowley was one [illegible] Shakespe[illegible] yet lesse[illegible] that, 'though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer,' and Pope, who owed him much, almost pronounced his condemnation a generation later:

> Who now reads Cowley? If he pleases yet,
> His moral pleases, not his pointed wit;
> Forgot his epic, nay Pindaric art,
> But still I love the language of his heart.

Yet, when Doctor Johnson wrote his *Lives of the English Poets* in 1778, he began with Cowley. Cowley existed for him, for all that he complacently gives the list of his faults. Cowley headed the moderns; his predecessors were out of date. Everything about Cowley assigns him to a transitional position: he

[1] Complete English works in *Poems* and *Essays, Plays and Sundry Verses*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1905 and 1906); for the Latin works recourse must still be had to Grosart's *Complete Works* (1881). See G. Loiseau, *Abraham Cowley, sa vie et son œuvre* (1931), and *Abraham Cowley's Reputation in England* (1931); H. Nethercot, *The Muses' Hannibal* (1931).

was the last of the metaphysical poets and in many respects he foreshadowed the English classicists.

He was marvellously precocious. Several, and not the least distinguished, of his poems date from his adolescence. As a good Anglican and a faithful Royalist, he might be reviewed among the Cavalier or the religious poets of the middle of this century. Equally, he deserved to be numbered among the disciples of Donne. His knowledge of the ancients, whom he imitates, entitles him to be considered a humanist. But with these characteristics certain others are mingled with the new and modify them. With all his piety, his fantasy, his conceits, and his Pindarism, Cowley is, first of all, an intellectual. He was the friend of Hobbes and admirer of Bacon, a founder of the Royal Society and a devotee of science who was made an M.D. of Oxford and was a student of botany.

Entirely without mysticism, capable of affection but not of passion, a sincere friend and a tepid lover, his mind dominated his heart and imagination. It was less pure reason which ruled his faculties than wit, the active and voluntary play of his combined intellect and fancy. His poetry, which never glows and is often imitative and cold, is full of learned reminiscences and scintillates with witticisms.

His love-verses in the fashion of the day, published in 1647 in the collection called *The Mistress*, are new versions, by a practised but frigid versifier, of the current themes of amorists. He succeeds only when he is amusing himself without any attempts to show feeling, as in the ballad called *The Chronicle*, in which he jestingly enumerates the mistresses who have reigned over his heart in succession. These are charmingly dexterous verses which we are not asked to take seriously. Herrick also gives the list of his mistresses, but with a tinge of melancholy which gains credence for himself and indulgence for his fickleness. Cowley's poem is no more than a set of pretty *vers de société*.

Cowley's great poetic ambitions have survived only as witnesses to his humanist's zeal. He conceived the idea of writing verses after Pindar. Ben Jonson had made a passing essay in this direction, but Cowley applied himself diligently to the task. He thought, as he relates in his copious commentary, to reproduce Pindar's enthusiasm, the boldness of his images and the freedom of his strophes. In truth, conceits, hyperboles, and antitheses, copied from Donne, fill his long, irregular stanzas, in which homely, even indecorous, imagery

alternates with grandiloquence. The result would be unreadable were it not lightened by flashes of wit. Here Cowley

intended to have twelve cantos but ends with the fourth. This poem is in the succession of Saint-Amand's *Moïse Sauvé* (1653) and of Chapelain's *Pucelle*, which also appeared in 1656, of poems, that is, which apply a form derived from antiquity to a Christian subject. Cowley anticipated Milton in going to Homer, and even more to Virgil, for a mould in which to cast his biblical matter. Unlike Boileau, he believed that a poet who was born a Christian ought to use the themes provided by Christianity.

Davideis begins with a vision of Hell, where there is uneasiness because of the progress of David, which Lucifer proposes to stem. With the help of Envy, the Prince of Darkness breathes jealousy into the heart of Saul. A second scene shows Heaven watching over David. Structurally all

stages a minutely detailed story following the biblical nar-

of any local colour is obtained by modernizing and vulgarizing scriptural indications. The college of the prophets in which

occasional verse. Here we find the poems which show him at his best as man, that *On the Death of Mr. William Hervey*, a Cambridge friend, and that *On the Death of Mr. Crashaw.*

Cowley, an Anglican and man of the world, pays warm tribute to the Catholic and religious poet, and the generosity of his feelings is equalled by the justice of his judgment on the verses of the 'Poet and Saint.'

But wit is, more than aught else, the mark of Cowley. It is not surprising that one of his small masterpieces is the ode *Of Wit*. He defines wit in the classical manner, and, prodigal as he is of it himself, he would have it used moderately. He condemns wit which is not controlled by reason or which is displayed too lavishly—and adds:

> Rather than all things Wit, let none appear;

he will have neither puns nor forced similes nor bombast. True wit is harmonious.

This very witty disquisition against wit, with its abundant imagery, ingenious to the point of subtlety, is curious.

Cowley's very remarkable poem *Against Hope* has the same character. It consists, from one end to the other, of subtle definitions of hope, so witty and so just in their strangeness that it is impossible not to admire the poet's virtuosity. He is on the tight-rope and we expect, at every moment, to see him fall into bad taste. But, more sure-footed than Donne, he keeps his balance. Crashaw answered his attack on hope by a defence. The retort is very beautiful and more poetic than the condemnation: the comparison of the two poems shows that Cowley lacked the qualities which are properly lyrical, but his brilliant ingenuity remains dazzling.

With years, Cowley's intellectualism was accentuated. He was on the way to 'the age of understanding.' He wrote verses on *Reason* in which he defines his piety and in which, like a good disciple of Hooker, he takes up the contrary position to the illuminati and the mystics. After the Restoration he addressed an ode *To the Royal Society* which is an eloquent tribute to Bacon. He was of those who thought that God reveals Himself in experimental philosophy, and he celebrates the great philosopher who, as Moses brought the children of Israel to the promised land, led the minds of men from bondage to the schoolmen into the freedom of experimental science:

> From words, which are but pictures of the thought,
> (Though we our thoughts from them perversely drew)
> To things, the mind's right object, he it brought:
> Like foolish birds, to painted grapes we flew;
> He sought and gathered for our use the true.

This significant poem concluded Cowley's unequal work. Without his defects as a writer and a versifier, he would have commanded more respect from succeeding generations. He had, however, no ear for sweet sounds. His best verses have

of Cowley's *Essays* is more read than his verses.

(*b*) EDMUND WALLER.—Edmund Waller (1606–87)[1] was born in the year in which *King Lear* was played and died in the year in which Dryden published *The Hind and the Panther*. His long life links up two periods separated by a political convulsion and a literary revolution. During the time of civil disturbance he played a more important part than his fellow-poets. A very rich man, and a member of Parliament

of pardon and toleration, and died on the eve of the Revolution. He left behind him a reputation for wit and his retorts are famous.

Throughout his life he wrote verse, but only occasional verse. He did not pride himself upon inventiveness. The aim

[1] *The Poems of Edmund Waller*, ed. G. Thorn-Drury (The Muses' Library

which he set before himself in his youth was like that which the young Pope proposed to follow. 'Methought,' he is reported to have said, 'I never saw a good copy of English verses; they want smoothness; then I began to essay.' Smoothness does indeed distinguish all the short poems he left to posterity—panegyrics, eulogies of the king and queen and Cromwell, patriotic poems, love poems, literary eulogies of Ben Jonson, of John Fletcher, and under the Commonwealth, of Roscommon, jesting verses like *The Battle of the Summer Islands*, and, finally, pious verses. Their date matters little. Elegance, correctness, a certain studied grace, something cold and stilted, belong to them all. The wit of the metaphysical poets recurs in Waller, but is attenuated, diluted, and purified. He is much less ingenious than Cowley, but also less apt to horrify taste. It is Thomas Carew whom he most resembles. The madrigals he sings to Sacharissa recall Carew's more decent verses by their distinction within a narrow compass, their regularity of structure, and their adroitness. His well-known poems—*The Bud, Go, lovely Rose* and *On a Girdle*—are models in this *genre*.

His imagery is clear and well sustained. He does not always avoid the pedantry of the Renascence and he sometimes uses ornamental mythology unjustifiably, but in these respects he is more discreet than many of his contemporaries. In his political and patriotic poems, in rhymed couplets of ten syllables, he is dignified and lofty. The fine verses he wrote towards the end of his life to express the serenity which accompanies old age might serve as text for an examination into the birth of classical qualities in literature. Here imagery is not strange or precious, but noble and strictly governed by the idea behind it. The lines are disposed in couplets each containing a full sentence. It is especially by the qualities which he displayed in this poem that Waller had an influence on literature. Dryden says that 'the excellence and dignity of it [rhyme] were never fully known till Mr. Waller taught it: he first made writing easily an art; first showed us to conclude the sense, most commonly in a distich.' Others, including Sandys, the translator of Ovid, did this before him, but it was Waller whom the classicists delighted to honour. His celebrity as a man doubtless contributed to the fortunes of his poetry. He was known to the French at a time when it was France who could place the hall-mark on literature. He earned the friendship of Saint-

Evremond and the admiration of La Fontaine, and Corneille was flattered to learn that he had the habit of translating a passage from his tragedies as each one appeared. Waller had the qualities, or rather the lack of defects, to meet the tastes and needs of a new age which cared less that an achievement should be original than that it should be correct and polite.

(c) JOHN DENHAM.—The other pioneer of classicism was John Denham (1615-69),[1] whose strength is praised by Pope in the same line as Waller's sweetness. The renown to which [illegible]

[illegible] didactic *Cooper's Hill* which appeared in 1642. It has been called the first example of local description, but in the main it is a meditation inspired by a place of many historical memories, near the Thames, Windsor Forest, the ruins of an abbey which recall the destruction of the monasteries, and Runnymede Field, where Magna Charta was signed. What description there is has a moralizing turn. The Thames serves as a term of comparison for moral and even literary qualities, for instance in the four famous lines which the author added to the 1653 edition, and which became for the classicists a slogan, the aesthetic motto inscribed upon their banner:

> O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
> My great example, as it is my theme!
> Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not dull;
> Strong without rage; without o'erflowing, full.

To-day it is difficult to understand the brilliant success and [illegible]

Among his miscellanous verse, two poems are witness to Denham's taste for metrical literary criticism. In his epistle *To Sir Richard Fanshawe upon his Translation of Pastor Fido,* he outlines, in some sort, a translators' art of poetry. He wishes them to be not slavish, but free and animated His advice is expressed in well-turned couplets which Pope might have included in his work without alteration. His antithetical style throws his ideas into relief, and he uses the decasyllabic couplet to mark his meaning by the balance between the parts of a line.

sensuous artist, but his juxtaposition of the two elements did but make their incompatibility more glaring. Milton was the first to conceive, from the outset of his career, a work which combined the perfection of ancient art and the intimate moral ardour of the Bible. He had experienced within his own heart the conflict of the opposing forces—paganism and Christianity, nature and religion—and he composed their differences in his own way. The proportion in which the two elements are present in his work varies with his years, but from the beginning his powerful will mingles them harmoniously. No other English poet was at once so profoundly religious and so much an artist.

Milton was born in a London family in easy circumstances, Christians who were not exaggeratedly strict, but succeeded in pursuing art as well as morals. His father was both pious and passionately devoted to music, and the young Milton's natural gifts, together with his success at school and the merits of his first verses, caused him to be consecrated to poetry and glory from an early age. Father and son seem to have shared the faith that such was his destiny. They had no thought of worldly renown, but believed in an indeterminate yet sublime vocation. The boy's preparation was intensely laborious: from the age of twelve it was his habit to work until midnight. He became a remarkable humanist, rivalling Buchanan as a Latin poet, and he also wrote verses in English, although his exacting standard, which left him long dissatisfied with his own art, led him to delay beginning his great works in the mother tongue.

It was at first intended that he should take orders, but he abandoned this plan when Laud was tyrannizing over the Church of England and exciting Puritan indignation by Romanizing Anglican ritual. Thereupon he devoted himself entirely to preparation for his poetic mission.

Meanwhile the youth, handsome and pure, knew the temptations of love and confided the first stirrings of his heart and senses to Latin verses: the charm of the fair young girls he saw in London parks, the disquieting voluptuousness of spring, the loves of the earth and the sun bearing fruit at the year's renewal. He could readily have yielded to the pleasures of love and to the joys of wine also, for he knew that it was Bacchus and Venus who had always inspired the Muses. But he also knew them fitted to inspire only workaday poets. He who aspired to the highest poetry, whose ambition it was

to be an epic poet, must drink only pure water and have a youth chaste as that of a priest. Such, he resolved, his own youth must be.

(*a*) Ode 'On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.'—He was at this time twenty years old. After some interesting essays, some fine verses to Shakespeare and the superb *At a Solemn Music,* which weds Voice and Verse, he wrote, in 1629, his first masterpiece, the ode *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity.* It contains hardly a trace of the 'metaphysical'

rather than that her Maker should see 'her foul deformities':

> Only with speeches fair
> She woos the gentle air
> To hide her guilty front with innocent snow.

But this is all. As the poem continues it grows greater and purer. It is admirable when it depicts the straitening of Satan's kingdom at the Nativity, and an incomparable series

light. The day has dawned before which all the powers of darkness are dissipated !

m has,
e same
words
ıb' on-

wards there is that intimate blending of sound and sense which makes Milton the most untranslatable of English poets. There is no apparent effort after imitative harmony. The interpenetration of sound and meaning is undefinable and mysterious. Proper names, the names of gods and goddesses,

st from the prophetic cell'
he Flamens at their service
Tyrian maids' who 'their

wounded Thammuz [Adonis] mourn,' the worshippers of Moloch:

> In vain with cymbals' ring,
> They call the grisly king,
> In dismal dance about the furnace blue—

and the sorcerers of Osiris:

> In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
> The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

To evoke these visions, the young poet uses all the resources of a language enriched by the Elizabethan treasure. He employs energetic abbreviations and composite epithets imported by the translator of du Bartas, but among the riches at his disposal he makes a severe choice. He keeps only the exquisite, reaches the limits of stylistic effect, but never lapses into obscurity or bad taste. To-day it seems incredible that the surprising beauty of this ode, at once so imaginative and so classical, did not impress the poet's contemporaries with its sublime perfection.

Thus Milton was already dedicating his highest art to the service of his religion. He did other work which was on a larger scale, but he never surpassed this ode.

(*b*) 'L'ALLEGRO' AND 'IL PENSEROSO.'—Milton was still at Cambridge when he wrote the ode on the Nativity. He went thence to his father's house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, having abandoned all thoughts of a practical career and resolved to devote himself entirely to study and poetry. From 1632 to 1638, when only rural leisure interrupted his solitary labours, he produced, one after another, the rest of his entrancing early poems.

We have noticed the lively taste for the country which distinguished Wither and Marvell. That poets who inclined to Puritanism and were genuinely repelled by the vices of the court and the town should seek 'unreproved pleasures free' in the country was natural. Milton's work in the years which he spent at Horton, not far from Windsor, in a fine wooded country, well watered, rich and green, shows deep feeling for nature.

This is nowhere clearer than in the first poetry he wrote there: *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. These short pieces are partly descriptive and partly poems of feeling; they reveal a landscape less than the poet's state of mind. Milton is discovered in search of the greatest of pure pleasures, or rather

making a diptych to represent the two aspects in which pleasure appears to him at different times, the alternation of his mirth and gravity. There is not, as in Hercules' choice in the fable of Prodicus, conflict between duty and desire. There is no element of the tragic: nowhere else indeed does this pure poet show himself so sportive. He recurs to the theme of the little poem at the beginning of *The Anatomy of Melancholy* in which Burton, in alternating and antithetic stanzas, relates the charms and curses of melancholy. He is also inspired by the delightful song in John Fletcher's *Nice Valour*—'Hence, all you vain delights!' Like Fletcher and unlike Burton, Milton finally gives his preference to melancholy, but he first recounts all the benefits of mirth. His novelty consists in his careful observation, at first hand, of the country. The aptness of the word 'twisted' to describe the eglantine may be disputed, but elsewhere there is only truth and pure poetry. He paints, on the one hand, all the joys which life and nature, in their laughing guise, can bring a man—the spring, the morning, the lark's song, the sunrise, the men and women at work on the land, their rustic meals, the harvest, the stories told at night by the chimneyside, and in 'towered cities,' 'the busy hum of men,'

> And pomp and feast and revelry,
> With mask and antique pageantry;

as well as the plays acted on 'the well-trod stage,' and the pleasures of 'soft Lydian airs.'

On the other hand, he describes the yet more penetrating pleasures of solitary meditation, sunset, the nightingale's song, moonlight on the 'dry smooth-shaven green,' and to hear

> the far-off curfew sound
> Over some wide-watered shore

Or else the Penseroso, among his books in 'some high lonely tower,' reads philosophy or science, or he will

> Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
> In sceptred pall come sweeping by,

until the morning appear, not in pomp but 'civil-suited.' His walks are among the 'archèd walks of twilight groves,' or 'the studious cloister'; he no longer haunts the playhouses but, instead, the Gothic cathedral, where he hears 'the pealing organ blow.'

The subsequent over-indulgence in description may make the lines of this double picture seem too facile and summary.

Yet no later work was able to obscure the charm o
poems or to equal their graceful restraint. Each so
no more than a collection of observations, yet each l
feeling which dominates it, unity. Each calls into
own spirit: the rosy nymph of Mirth—

> So buxom, blithe and debonair,

with her 'wreathèd smiles,' which 'love to live in dimp
tripping 'on the light fantastic toe' and leading in h
hand 'the mountain nymph, sweet Liberty'; and '
Melancholy,' 'whose saintly visage is too bright,'
therefore 'o'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue,' th
sive Nun, devout and pure,'

> With even step and musing gait,
> And looks commercing with the skies,
> Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes.

Nothing could be simpler than the form of this diptych
in rhyming couplets, each line having four accents, the
metre which by its facility led other poets to be diffuse
garrulous. But here it is held in check by an artist who re
all but the exquisite. Milton uses learnedly what is lic
in many other versifiers. He alternates, at will, the cal
iambic with the abrupter and lighter trochaic measure. Th
two poems, which contain altogether 328 short lines, are fil
to overflowing with the results of accurate observation a
are an inexhaustible lesson in art. At the same time th
display the whole of Milton's register, the extreme notes
the gamut of his feelings at this time. The register is shor
it excludes sin, evil, and pain, hardly includes mankind excep
as a passing spectacle, and has no place for any feeling whic
is not both very pure and very egoistical—the intimat
pleasures of contemplation and study. Milton's soul held
as shall be seen, what was greater and better than this: he
was capable of sublimity, devotion to a cause, and submission
to great sacrifice. The theme of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*
is merely, in the last analysis, the search for the pleasures to
which he was most susceptible, and his final preference is for
the most solitary and unsociable of them, for melancholy.

Curiously he excludes love from his sources of felicity. This
young man of twenty-five had turned his gaze heavenward
and almost dreamt of a hermit's cell. Even in *L'Allegro* there
is only one, and the vaguest, allusion to a fair lady living in a
neighbouring castle 'bosomed high in tufted trees.'

Perhaps Horton had quenched the ardours which London once had kindled, or perhaps the poet deliberately confined himself to rustic themes in these poems. The conclusion is that he did not yet give himself free scope in English vers

(c) His Masques. 'Arcades.' 'Comus.'—The mo problem is posed in the subsequent poems, which express, in allegorical or veiled form, the conflict in the poet's heart. Externally Milton observed the fashions of the Renascence. He wrote masques, those sumptuous operas which were the dazzling fringe of the dramatic art reproved by the Puritans, or he had recourse to the pastoral fiction. But this is true only of the outer form of his poems, which alone conformed to the spirit of the age. Every emanation of Milton's thought

masque, is a fine compliment

tess of Derby, whose praises

the words of a complete masque, *Comus*, for which Henry

fifteen, and his two sons, who were younger still, were the principal actors in the masque. Alice is represented to have lost herself in the wood on her way to the castle, to have become separated from her two brothers and to be misled by Comus, the lustful magician, who makes a vain attempt on her virtue. She is saved once by her brothers, who put Comus and his crew to rout. But enchantment has deprived her of the power of movement and she is set free only by the intervention of the nymph Sabrina, who personifies the Severn. The sister and brothers afterwards return to the castle. Throughout the maiden is protected by a tutelary genius, 'the Attendant Spirit,' disguised as the shepherd Thyrsis, and it is with the help of his counsels that Comus is vanquished. When once she is saved, the Attendant Spirit, after finally exhorting mankind to virtue, departs to his celestial abode.

The plot is seen to be very slight. Milton goes back, beyond Renascence drama, to the simplicity of the early

morality. He is without dramatic sense or the sense of the stage, and the masque is full of monologues and lengthy tirades. When the brothers have lost their sister, they discuss, in 160 lines, whether her virtue is in danger or whether she has in herself her means of defence. The Attendant Spirit then supervenes and continues the discussion for 170 more lines before any step is taken to save the maiden.

There are many charming, delicate descriptions in the masque, too subtle to be appreciated or even, perhaps, immediately understood, as they are heard on the stage.

The didactic intention is so apparent that it deadens the required emotion and prevents anxiety. Such confidence is felt in the strength of virtue that there can be no doubt of the event. The girl herself feels fear as little as temptation. Comus, god of drunkenness and lust, has nothing of the true voluptuary. He shows the bones of anacreonticism too nakedly. His banqueting and drinking could never have troubled the maiden's senses; his schoolman's arguments are too cold to shake her. We could understand Spenser's Sir Guyon succumbing to the treacherous lures of Acrasia's bower, but Milton's heroine never has the possibility of falling. She is able to understand only the outer meaning of the words by which Comus seeks to induce her to sin.

Everything which might be dramatic is frozen or suppressed. The characters remain abstract as virtues or vices. The only happy stage effect is that produced when the girl enters the wood which Comus haunts and calls her brothers by her song to 'sweet Echo.' All the rest is poetry addressed to the ear or the mind. The pleasure of a spectacle is not provided any more than dramatic emotion.

These are grave omissions. In its old age the Renascence was letting go of part of its treasure. But in this masque there are compensating novelties which are admirable. The exclusive, absolute purity may not be very dramatic, but it keeps to the heights of lyricism. This is a white, immaculate hymn to virtue. The very passages which offend the dramatic sense are beautiful in themselves, for instance the elder brother's speech or that in which the girl repels Comus. The descriptions made with so much art are little fitted to be heard on the stage, but they charm when they are read, mingling, as they do, realistic touches and subtle classical reminiscences. Above all, the style is pure as the moral. It is a new style, but one enriched by its Elizabethan past and by the quintes-

sence of antiquity: everything has been sifted until only the perfect remains. There is less movement than with the Elizabethans; the
speare and Fletc
learnedly chastene
fection, is pithy a
verse and even more in the rhymed passages of *Comus*, especially in the admirable songs, this is apparent. Less spontaneous than the 'native woodnotes wild' of the Elizabethan stage, Milton's songs are exquisite garden-flowers. The complete purity of versification and crystalline music of syllables in the song to Echo, the appeal to the nymph Sabrina, and her reply, 'By the rushy-fringèd bank,' are unequalled.

Hardly more than twenty years separate *Comus* from *The Tempest*, but the change wrought in this short time is under-
ton's
nan's
who
is clear about what he has to do and is not to be turned from his path. Both spirits leave the earth when their task is
to heaven amid
vords a plea for

While Shakespeare is lost among his creations, Milton is in truth the only living being who exists in his own work. His heroine is himself, Comus tempts as he has been tempted; she resists as he did; he speaks every word in the poem. Comus merely
has felt
disdainf
virtue remote from mankind and above it, sure and haughty virtue, ignoring the multitude. For the Milton of *Comus*, as for
dan

Edward King, who had been much loved at the universit and who seemed assured of a brilliant future when he w drowned in a shipwreck near Anglesea. Milton and Kir were probably not very intimate. The grief of a bereave friend is less apparent in this poem than in the Latin eleg *Epitaphium Damonis*, in which a year later Milton mourne the loss of his beloved Diodati. Emotions are, however, several kinds. That in *Lycidas* is born of the fact that Milto thinking of King's fate, is brought back to himself, and springs also from the highest and rarest of all sources feeling—the beauty of verse.

The two hundred lines of *Lycidas* are among the mo precious treasures of English poetry. Their pastoral dress out of date and they abound in mythological allusions. The is religious satire in them, as in Spenser's eclogues; and the are not eminent for simple pathos. They have a very powe ful but a special fragrance which cannot be appreciated with out some initiation.

It is not King but Milton who should be sought in then The death of this friend who was so young, and whose futu promised so much, led Milton to reflect on his own lif Lycidas, or King, had been wont 'to scorn delights and liv laborious days,' devoting himself whole-heartedly to the mu without ambition of worldly success. To what end? Milto asks. Nowhere else has he so poetically uttered the hauntin thought:

> Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
> To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
> And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
> Were it not better done as others use,
> To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
> Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?

Yet he does not hesitate in his choice. Phoebus tells hi that the guerdon is not fame, 'that last infirmity of nob mind,' but that he must 'in heaven expect his meed;' and he thinks of this distant and austere reward he sighs n longer.

His train of thought is interrupted when the Church is sug gested, for, like all the more ardent reformers, those wh became Puritans, he was irked by Laud's tyranny and by th Romanizing tendency of some churchmen. He inserts a invective which presages the part he was to play in con troversy. But it is isolated. *Lycidas* remains the poem of

refined humanist, an example of supreme perfection of st imagery, and versification. A spell is woven as Milton lame that he must sing before his genius is ripe—

I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year—

and also by the lines in which he strews the hearse of Lyci with flowers, then remembers that he has no tomb but waters, then stays his tears at the vision of his friend rapt heaven. Art in this poem rebels against strictness, in s

land, and spent sixteen months in Italy, not suffering revolt of the Scottish Presbyterians against Laud to det him. To stay where the abhorred popes had their seat also to d
modern.
his faith,
part in academic discussions, writing fine Latin and Itali verses which caused the men of letters to marvel at the cult of this Northerner
Marquis of Villa,
then of Marini.
awoke his enthusiasm; it seemed to him that in h

praesentem vox sonat ipsa Deum'; that God, who was everywhere, spoke only through her:

> Quod, si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaque fusus,
> In te una loquitur, caetera mutus habet.

Returning home by way of Lucca, he fell in love with an Italian lady whose praises he sang in five Italian sonnets. On all sides the voices of the Renascence were whispering their precious memories in his ear, telling him of beauty and love.

2. *The Period of Political Strife. The Sonnets.*—Meanwhile, in England, the struggle between the king and the Parliament had begun, and he says that it hastened his return. Certainly it awoke his dormant religious ardour. For twenty years the realization of all his great poetic dreams was suspended, at the cost of a sacrifice which cannot be exaggerated and which should be the measure of the nobility of his soul. He did indeed try for some years to reconcile his newly awakened religious fervour with his poetic ambitions. His dream of an Arthurian epic was succeeded by a plan for a religious tragedy on the fall of the angels, the creation and the fall of man. But this, too, was abandoned for the duties which he held to be more immediate. Henceforth, until the Restoration, he wrote only prose, 'wherein,' he said of himself, '. . . I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand.' He obliged himself 'to embark on a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies,' and

> to club quotations with men whose learning and belief lies in marginal stuffings, who, when they have, like good sumpters, laid ye down their horseload of citations and fathers at your door, . . . ye may take their pack saddles, their day's work is done. . . . Let any gentle apprehension, that can distinguish learned pains from unlearned drudgery, imagine what pleasure or profoundness can be in this, or what honour to deal against such adversaries.

Never did a poet torn from his muse express his impatience more angrily. Yet he did not flinch, and until the Restoration silenced him as a polemist, he wrote no verse beyond some dozen occasional sonnets, of which four or five are, in their own *genre*, the most memorable in the language. They have nothing in common with the sonnet-series on love dear to the Elizabethans. As Wordsworth has well said of Milton's use of the sonnet:

> in his hand
> The thing became a trumpet.

me of his sonnets are personal effusions, others allude to s polemical writings, or they are fragments of the great ing epic in which he played a part—addressed to Fairfax, omwell, and Sir Harry Vane. Many are deliberately rude d harsh, witnesses to his refusal to cultivate the slighter aces in this tragic time. But Milton was visited by Beauty

d time to serve his Maker as he would,

> Patience, to prevent
> That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
> Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
> Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
> Is kingly: thousands at his bidding speed,
> And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
> They also serve who only stand and wait

There is powerful pathos in the sonnet he wrote to his cond wife, Catharine Woodcock, who died in childbed in 58, fifteen months after their marriage. Milton had never en her in life; his first sight of her was in his dream, after r death, when she

> Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
> Her face was
> Love, swee
> So clear, as i
> But O, as
> I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

The most marvellous of his sonnets is, however, that on e massacre of the Waldensians by the Piedmontese The 'aldensians were dear to Protestants because they were

llow a single uninterrupted train of thought; a phrase is ntinued from one line to another, even from one quatrain another. The effect is surprising: sentences seem to be it short, not by art but by indignation. But the most riking feature of the sonnet is the rhymes—on *ones, old, ay,*

and the long *o*. They ring out like a knell or an alarm-bell, or like the groans of the poor unfortunates slaughtered on cold Alpine slopes. These fourteen lines are at once the explosion of a wrath as genuine as it was deep and an inexhaustible lesson on art.

3. *The Great Works of Milton's Maturity.*—In 1660 the Restoration forced Milton to return to private life. Both his life and his liberty were at first in some danger, but he finally enjoyed security in his retreat, whither some friends penetrated and where he was able to return to the poetic projects of his youth. They resulted in his three capital works, *Paradise Lost*, published in 1667, *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, published in 1671. The Milton they reveal is new. His private misfortunes and the anguish of the nation had darkened his thought, and his long and vehement participation in controversy had implanted in him an ineradicable dialectical habit. He felt something like contempt for the exquisite productions of his youth, blushed that he had so loved rhyme. He felt the need of a severer harmony based only on rhythm and articulate only as was his thought. Henceforward he wrote nothing but blank verse. He had done with pastorals, lyrics of determined form, and songs, and also with slight subjects and with the fine analysis of subtle spiritual states. The blind poet rejected the themes of the Renascence and found inspiration and matter only in the Bible. He sang the creation, the fall of the angels, the fall of man and Christ's reconquest of Paradise, and he told of the sacrifice of Samson, who died willingly because his death entailed that of the enemies of his country.

(*a*) 'Paradise Lost.'—*Paradise Lost*, Milton's principal work, is the most Hebraic of great English poems. It is the fruit of a Puritan's prolonged meditations on the Bible: it paints the visions the Bible has given him. He let nothing intervene between the Bible and himself; he allowed himself complete liberty in interpreting it, but he gave it entire faith. He accepts the whole of biblical history as authentic and sacred. But he retells it as one who bears all the burden of contemporary knowledge, whose personality is intense and self-centred, and who has little dramatic sense. He projects himself, his feelings, knowledge, and aspirations, into the characters of his epic, both the primitive human creatures and the superhuman beings, whether celestial or infernal.

The strange result is a perpetual conflict between his faith

and his nature which deflects the poem from its purpose and distributes sympathy in despite of the poet's intentions. The moral thesis of Genesis is submission to the Almighty, which makes disobedience into sin. But Milton, who wished to emphasize this moral, had an independent spirit and had lived independently. He had acclaimed and advocated the re-

enemy of God. The pride and indomitable courage of the revolted angel rekindled the emotion of the intensest hours of his life, and, do what he would, he saw God as the king of England,
courtiers,
in glorious
service to
chanting a hymn to freedom and rebellion. It is into Satan that he has put most of himself, his pride, and his temperament. As a sincere believer, he intended to 'justify the ways of God to men.' But he could not do it on the impulse of confident love.

An immense place in the poem is given up to arguments by which it is encumbered and chilled. Academic arguing in favour of divine foreknowledge and human free-will leaves even the pious reader in doubt and ill at ease.

When the dialectics are voiced by Adam or Eve, the surprise is considerable that primitive beings, who might be expected to have direct and simple

and falsifies while he professedly respects it. Hence result the limitations of *Paradise Lost*, and the element of the ridiculous which this noble poem includes and of which Taine made so much.

The imagination by which a man can get outside himself and his own time and evoke strange and far-away beings was not among Milton's gifts. His conceptions could, however, be vast; he could present the universe with a sense of its immensity which leaves far behind the curious, grotesque, and

comparison, but in a way which betrays acute consciousness of the relations between the myths of various religions.

The style is more Latin than that of any other English poem. The meaning of the words, the syntax, the division of sentences, and the use of the ablative absolute, constantly remind the scholarly reader of classical authors. The periodic style and the unrhymed line, with its beauty dependent only on its cadence, and its inversions, have a severe solemnity, an unbending energy. The work is more full of meaning, denser, more uninterruptedly artistic, and more constantly lifted above the level of prose than any other in English poetry. When *Paradise Lost* is compared with *The Faerie Queene*, the gain and loss which it represents can be computed. The joy of free and adventurous curiosity and of fancy, the bold enjoyment of whatever charms the senses, the prodigious variety, and the voluptuous music of stanzas and rhymes: all these Milton had lost. He had gained constructive force, unity of design, concentration of effort, moral seriousness, and the restraint which enables effect to be produced by quality rather than quantity. Spenser multiplied his monsters, but his description of Error, and of the Dragon who lays waste the lands of Una's father, is superficial, childish ornament, beside the terrifying visions of Sin and Death in the second book of *Paradise Lost*. This comparison gives the measure of the difference between the imaginations and natures of the two poets.

(*b*) 'PARADISE REGAINED.'—*Paradise Regained* completes and answers *Paradise Lost*. Its theme is taken from the first verses of the fourth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel—Christ withstanding Satan's temptations after forty days of fasting in the wilderness. Milton traces the Redemption back to this triumph, which Giles Fletcher had already sung in *Christ's Victory and Triumph*. Paradise was lost by Eve when she yielded to Satan's temptation, regained by Christ when He got the better of the same tempter, and thereby ended the reign of Satan upon earth.

Our first impression as we pass from *Paradise Lost* to *Paradise Regained* is of brilliancy dulled, a greyer atmosphere and lowered tones. By comparison, the second poem even seems to drag, to move sadly. Imaginative greatness, Heaven and Hell are gone, or nearly gone. Satan has shrunk in stature and his fire is quenched. Instead of indomitable energy he has tortuous slyness and hypocrisy. Instead of a marvellous

epic we have a morality. The poem is entirely human, its interest concentrated on the temptation of a single soul. Milton, the great heretic, did not see God in Christ, but only superior humanity. It is only metaphorically that he calls Him the Son of God. He describes the efforts, the meditations and the interior struggles through which Christ deter- ... We are struck by the ... and the poet himself ... d the idea of an heroic war as Milton did that of an Arthurian epic. Like Milton, He has searched His soul in order to know His mission on earth. His temptations are Milton's own, save that Christ is proof against the love of women, which Milton was not. To the offer of kingly dominion or of untold gold, Christ answers like an ascetic and a republican. The tempter thereupon offers Him Greece, her art, literature, and philosophy, and ... have been the ... the ancients ... uence.' But ...

> Alas, what can they teach, and not mislead,
> Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
> And how the world began, and how man fell,
> Degraded by himself, on grace depending?

Knowledge without true wisdom is vain. Even Greek poetry is inferior to Hebrew poetry; Greek mythology is a tissue of absurdities; the Greek orators are far beneath the Hebrew prophets.

This poem has not the greatness, the vigour, or the brilliancy of its predecessor, but it arrests and holds our interest by its revelations of Milton, his soul, and the change which had gradually come over him since the days of his passionate ...

Even more than in *Paradise Lost*, the despiser of the Greeks shows himself their disciple. In form, the poem is a completely regular tragedy after Sophocles. It has choruses made of lines of unequal length which constitute long and free lyrical strophes and are interpolated in the dialogue, and the verse is rhymed only in the choruses, and there only

epic we have a morality. The poem is entirely human, its interest concentrated on the temptation of a single soul. Milton, the great heretic, did not see God in Christ, but only superior humanity. It is only metaphorically that he calls Him the Son of God. He describes the efforts, the meditations and the interior struggles through which Christ determined and accomplished His mission. We are struck by the resemblance between Milton's Christ and the poet himself (i. 195–207). This Christ has rejected the idea of an heroic war as Milton did that of an Arthurian epic. Like Milton, He has searched His soul in order to know His mission on

st is

To

wers

upon

and

the

supreme temptation. He praises the wisdom of the ancients and describes Athens, 'mother of arts and eloquence.' But

> Alas, what can they teach, and not mislead,
> Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
> And how the world began, and how man fell,
> Degraded by himself, on grace depending?

Knowledge without true wisdom is vain. Even Greek poetry is inferior to Hebrew poetry; Greek mythology is a tissue of absurdities; the Greek orators are far beneath the Hebrew prophets.

of

rev

gradually come over him since the days of his passionate devotion to classical authors and the poets of the Renaissance

shows himself their disciple. In form, the poem is a completely regular tragedy after Sophocles. It has choruses made of lines of unequal length which constitute long and free lyrical strophes and are interpolated in the dialogue, and the verse is rhymed only in the choruses, and there only

exceptionally. The action of the drama passes in one place and during a single day. The conformity with Greek plays is outwardly greater than in any of the so-called classical modern tragedies. We must add, however, that the essential part of tragedy—progress and action—is wanting. Milton, lacking the dramatic sense, succeeded, after all, in producing only one more powerful lyrical poem. Not until the end of the tragedy, line 1300—when the total number of lines is 1750—can we discern a plot or perceive that the action is progressing and a future is indicated. Until then no issue is in prospect. There are only Samson's eloquent and pathetic laments and memories of the past. The play is almost entirely retrospective; in that it fails to arouse curiosity and uneasiness about the future, it neglects a fundamental element of tragedy.

But apart from this, the various scenes have a pathos, sufficient for a poem not intended for the stage, which derives from the old blind Puritan fighter's instinctive identification of himself with the Hebrew champion who was Delilah's victim, and who suffered the yoke of the Philistines. He too had survived the triumph of adversaries he despised for their mean souls and vile pleasures, and in his heart the memory still rankled of the betrayal of his faith by a wife from the enemy camp. The drama is all Samson—the sadness of his lot, his remorse for his errors, his grief that his cause and his nation have been laid low, his impotence in a world in which he has become the slave of those whom he conquered and whom he despises. The scene is superb in which Delilah approaches him, 'like a stately ship,' 'with all her bravery on, and tackle trim,' and hypocritically implores his pardon, advancing every pretext to excuse her betrayal—love, for she wanted him all to herself, and religion, for she claims to have acted in the name of her gods. He replies to all her advances by overwhelming her with his disdain, will not let her even touch his hand, and finally flings her an insulting pardon—

> At distance I forgive thee; go with that—

and the chorus thereupon descant bitterly on the mystery of woman, whose love is not to be won by merit, whose nature is deceit.

After enlarging on woman's inferiority to man, they end with Milton's own conclusion:

> Therefore God's universal law
> Gave to the man despotic power
> Over his female in due awe.

This c . worthy of t poet of im in anoth aspect, tic career. confirms what was evident from the first, that his work pr ceeded from a pride which reached sublimity and from heroic egoism. It proceeded also from his incomparab art, shown equally, although diversely, in the delicate rhym poetry of his youth and in the powerful blank verse of h maturity.

The appearance of these later poems in a dissolute, cynic time, incapable of feeling either poetic sublimity or religio *exaltation, was strange. Milton was the last survivor of t* great age.

A gulf, perhaps deeper than that between the Engli Middle Ages and the Renascence, separates the Renascen from modern times. But what a marvellous transformati was accomplished in the century which intervened betwe the appearance of the first works of Spenser and Sidney, 1579, and the last works of Milton, in 1671! The count which hitherto had always received the impulse to literatu from abroad had become proudly conscious of her streng

gradually admitted throughout Europe to a place in the ve first rank of artists. Such was their prestige that even t rin r t , u pr pared the way, throughout the eighteenth century, for t imaginative renewal which led finally to Romanticism. D tance increased their stature and they came to domina English literature. Rich though this literature be in adm able writers, it has never produced any to surpass Bacon Spenser, to attain to the same height as Milton, or to approac even from afar, the place whence the light of Shakespea shines on all the world.

PART II

MODERN TIMES (1660–1937)

BOOK I—LITERATURE OF THE RESTORATION
(1660-1702)

CHAPTER I

SOURCES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW LITERATURE

1. *The Historical Significance of the Restoration with Reference to the Past and Future.*—From the political point of view the modern development of the English people dates from 1688, but in the moral and literary order the date is 1660. The Restoration of King Charles II marks the decisive birth of the new world.

Whatever innovations may have been introduced by the Puritan Republic, from this point of view it formed an integral part of the past. Stern daughter of the Reformation, it nevertheless continued and completed the Renascence; it was the last of a series of great national experiments in which was expended a moral liberty that had been but recently acquired The Elizabethan age had pursued its manifold

The forces thus liberated, and the fervent zeal in matters of religion, would give birth in turn to an ideal that aimed at organizing life according to divine laws; and the Commonwealth, this compound of mystic and social aspirations, represents the vain striving, along the avenue of inspired thought, for an equilibrium, the experimental conditions of which were thenceforth to become more clear.

After this period of feverish activity, and under the exhaustion that follows in its train, the vigour of the nation lapses into a state of temporary torpor; for the space of some thirty more years, it has to undergo the trials of an absolute régime.

The constitution of parliamentary England, and the laws governing its progress, will only be definitively fixed with the fall of the Stuart dynasty. But already the ruin of the biblical absolutism of the 'Saints' had restored to their normal functions instincts of liberty which sooner or later were to bring about the freedom of English politics. From now onwards, the era of too lofty ambitions and of juvenile errors is closed. The stamp of disillusionment, as that of reflection, is everywhere visible in the thought, the ideas, and the manners of the Restoration. Empiricism, in which is summed up the most characteristic genius of the English people, becomes the conscious law governing its existence.

In order to place the Restoration, and link it up with a whole, there is thus no hesitating between the future and the past. It is a period which determines itself with relation to that which precedes it, and therefore might seem to be inseparable from it altogether; and so it is, in so far as political reaction is the outcome of action. But in all other respects, it is towards the future that it tends. Although a last upheaval will be necessary to annul the recurring offences of unlimited monarchy, all activities in the realm of thought enter, with the Restoration, into the cycle of their regular movement, free henceforth from all extreme accidental happenings. A new society and a new literature begin in 1660.

2. *The New Mental Outlook.*—If 1660 as a year assumes a greater importance than 1688, it is due to the fact that the deeper life of the mind is a more decisive cause, or a more essential aspect, of the evolution of the race, than are the stages which mark the progress of political history. The Restoration coincides with one of the most notable changes in the inner being of the English soul.

It is customary, in order to explain the main trend of modern English literary history, to show, first of all, that at this point in its curve, the government, the social life, and the manners are undergoing a process of transformation; so that the change in the aesthetic tone of the period corresponds with that effected in the domain of outward reality. It is, however, more correct, if one wishes to respect the real order of things, to follow the opposite course. For a considerable number of years an oscillation both in thought and in taste had been slowly preparing; the Restoration sees it take place, and on a big scale. This is certainly no chance conjunction, but it would be risky to deduce, so to speak, one of the two

terms — whichever it be — from the other. We can only affirm that if the character of the new age reveals itself boldly and in a way that is strikingly manifest, it is because the circumstances of the time are wholly favourable to the spontaneous development of the moral rhythm.

From the earliest days of the Elizabethan period, English literature had depended for its sustenance on the passionate life of imagination. It was an epoch when even intellectual inquiry was stirred by the rapture of sense and feeling; in other words, it represented a rich flowering of romantic inspiration. Already at the beginning of the seventeenth

imaginative analyses of Bacon; the poems of Donne, then those of the metaphysical school, had all revealed the secret working of the mind of the age. In spite of the names that continue to add lustre to Elizabethan literature even in its closing years, we find it languishing and dying because the inner resources that had fed it are now exhausted; and in its decadence there is recognizable the embryo of the literature of reason which must of necessity replace it.

The new instinctive desire is for order and balance in measure; that it to say, what was wanted in art was an intellectual quality, because the intellect alone is the chief factor in orderly arrangement and simple clearness. The literary transition from the Renascence to the Restoration is

movement and equal swing, how great was the desire for a music that was regular and cadenced, where the echoing of the rhymes continually reassured and strengthened the perception of order. From then onwards, classicism becomes the pole which attracts the hidden working of individual minds.

When once the 'reign of Saints' terminates in indifference

weariness, or wrath, an unbearable and artifically prolonged tension of wills, sustained by the religious and mystical exaltation of feeling, gives way abruptly under the stress of a sudden conviction, just as it gives way to superior force. Reason, good sense, and the practicality of a people held in check for twenty years, break down the weakened dike of Puritan tyranny; and with the fall of the Republic, there sweeps over the country a wave of scorn and hate for all the zeal, the straitlacedness of conscience, the sentimental aspect of piety, the cheat of a hollow spiritual and secular hierarchy. A great and decisive moral experience, underlying the political revolution of 1660, brings to completion the obscure working of thought that has been developing slowly for half a century. The nation as a whole, in its strong desire to live, gives itself over to ways of thinking and modes of life towards which its imperious instinct had already inclined it. The moral rhythm which has long been preparing and incipient, finally frees itself in 1660, and with its irresistible swing carries England towards an era of sovereign rationality.

3. *The Monarchy and Manners.*—The new régime establishes itself for the benefit of a reconstituted hierarchy, while social relationships are determined by the idea of authority and privilege. The king is too indolent, too fond of pleasure to endow his personal government with any reliable and systematic strength. Around him, the aristocracy of birth resumes its privileged place; a court is organized; preferments and positions are distributed as the master pleases. After the threats of a democracy based on equality and communistic in outlook, which the agitation of the Commonwealth had in a dim way contained, all those whose interest it is to have a stable order of things now joyfully hail the re-establishment of that order, whether in actual fact or in official fiction. Whitehall becomes the centre of officialdom and elegant life, throwing Westminster and Parliament quite into the shade. The brilliance of this focus is reflected in the nearest circles of society; the 'town,' that is to say fashionable London, prides itself upon the near presence of the sovereign, and acquires the courtier tone. Provincial England, remote and hidden away, does not participate in the brilliant life of this little closed world, save through the slow currents of circulation, either of men, of money, or of news. Everything favours the constitution of an aristocratic literature.

The instinctive seeking after balance encourages the intro-

duction of method in the realm of thought. Social influences are most decidedly favourable to the tendencies of literary taste. Rationality is the natural ally of order. It presupposes a certain choice, an analysis, a reflective turn of mind, which can be indulged in especially by those in the easier walks of higher life; at the same time it supposes a clear and disciplined habit of attention, rendered possible by culture and an atmosphere of calm. In a nation where the most naturally creative impulses have found utterance in an instinctive Romanticism, classicism will be the outcome of a voluntary reaction, of a doctrine that has to be learnt, of a more or less artificial effort. Restoration society creates the atmosphere of refinement, or rather of exclusiveness, where an art can exist and flourish that is sustained, so to speak, by the inbred persuasion of its own superiority over popular forms of expression, as well as over the primitive and uncouth inventions of national genius.

At court, and in the social circles of which it is the centre, there reigns a tone of moral dryness and scepticism. The foundations of public law can no longer boast of tradition or mystery; too many upheavals have already shaken the prestige of the throne; while the Restoration of Charles II, [illegible]

The nobles are now able to recover their prestige, their sinecures; the middle class, a calm so indispensable to its business concerns. The idea of public utility is at the bottom of this accord, an implicit contract indeed, the violation of which will at a later date bring about the fall of the Stuart dynasty. Utilitarianism becomes the more conscious guide of individual actions. In opposition to a mysticism that is exhausted, corrupted by its inner wear, and changed into hypocrisy, the new régime re-establishes the supremacy of clear and cold experience; and the memory of all the lies and vain pretensions, so long endured, sharpens into an ironical mood the inner sense of this return to reality. A society devoid of all illusions sets about reconstructing itself on the unseemly ruins of a theocracy, and will no longer recognize any guide save intelligence.

The Puritans banned pleasure; the Restoration reinstates it in all its rights, and its new-found liberty develops at once into licentiousness. Public festivals are re-established, popular entertainments authorized, and the theatres are reopened. Manners are allowed to slip into the toleration of vice, and almost its encouragement. Against the painful, useless effort of official sanctity, we have the reaction of what is really the taste and instinct of the time. The atmosphere of violent and often coarse voluptuousness in which the court and the fashionable world are equally bathed, is intimately and secretly in accord with the arid tone and lucid outlook of the mental life of the day. The rational character of all artistic inspiration is supported by the dearth of any great enthusiasm, by a constant pursuit of pleasure and utility, which gives itself out to be an enlightened quest.

The Elizabethan age had been an outburst of initiative and a fresh welling up of life; the Restoration, emerging from the restraint exercised by the Republic over all instinct, shows neither the same wealth nor the same vigour. Only in the outbreak of passion and sensual joy is there any enthusiasm; in everything else, it is as if the sap of the nation's life were impoverished. This is a misleading appearance, yet one that answers to a deep reality, a phase of critical thought rather than of action. The withering up, on the other hand, has a positive aspect, the progress in every direction of the spirit of rational research. The desire to judge and classify human values, to explore and organize the physical world, increases and expresses itself with an independence at least relative; literature and science benefit from the freedom allowed in matters of conduct. Writers grow conscious of the authority of rules, and are occupied in the task of trying to frame them; the art of writing is the subject of many a learned treatise. It now becomes an exercise of methodical and deliberate taste, to appreciate a book at its proper value. At the same time, moral and political philosophy sets out to formulate a more precise code of laws; the study of the human understanding is being boldly tackled; and the spirit of inquiry, freed from the sense of any impious purpose, begins to probe the secrets of nature. If the founding of the Royal Society is a sign, the importance of which cannot be too highly rated, it is because it corresponds with a widespread desire for knowledge, shared in by almost all the active minds of the time.

4. *French Influence.*—Thus the outstanding characteristics of the new age are explained by the remarkable precision with which social circumstances accentuate the spontaneous bents of souls. But one may wonder whether there are not, in the intellectual physiognomy of the Restoration, certain traits which come, as it were, entirely from without, and which are only the result of circumstances. Might not the influence of France be purely an accident in history?

It is not an accident. It had been prepared, in the first place, by the more frequent intercourse that had taken place between the two countries and the two courts, since the fourth decade of the seventeenth century. The choice by which France became the refuge for those banished after the Civil War, has a much deeper significance than can be explained by the mere convenience of that country's proximity to England; it arises from a strong affinity, and one that continues to develop, between French civilization on the one hand and the very essence of monarchical culture on the other; with the result that the restored Stuart dynasty brought back of necessity with it the sense of the prestige of the French monarchy. If the exiles of the Commonwealth period—and with the courtiers of Charles II were many of the writers of his reign—imbibed in France, or believed they had imbibed, the spirit of the nation's manners and literature, it was because they felt the attraction of a great reign that had already begun, of a national flowering that was already in full bloom. But neither geography, nor political and social history, can account for the force and extent of this influence. At an earlier date than in England, and in a more definite way, the moral development in France tended towards a phase of sovereign rationality; and when once this ideal had grown clear and become, as it were, a beacon light on the [illegible]

spontaneously turned. The ground was now ready to receive the seed of the French influence. This was fruitful, in so far [illegible]

provinces; it left its strong mark upon fashions and manners, the superficial sides of life; it even penetrated to modes of

feeling and thinking, and through the language, as well as through the authority of precepts and aesthetic examples, it fashioned or rather taught and encouraged certain habits and preferences of taste. As soon as one goes into details, the number of imitations, borrowings, and reminiscences is very abundant; and the study of many a writer would be incomplete, if this influence were left out of account. But it is through their diffused effect, through the creation of an atmosphere, that French literature and life have had their most subtle, most real, influence. In English letters and art, the tone of the epoch is made up of national sound-vibrations, with an intermingling of foreign notes. Among the latter can be distinguished that of Spain, the theatre of which, for example, was not without some influence. But that of France is distinct and superior enough to impregnate the very quality of the harmony. The development of poetry, especially, bears the traces of this essential and, in certain respects, dominant suggestion. The character and rhythm of the English classical line are fixed, so to speak, by the authority of an inner choice, which in its turn is prompted, accentuated, and even controlled by the cadence of French verse.

5. *Writers and the Social Surroundings.*—In order to complete the sketch of the frame in which Restoration literature develops, a place must be reserved for the social condition of the writer.

This has been recognized as one of the characteristic features of the period, and has served to supply a contrast with that which follows. The opposition thus established is exact, though it would be wrong to imply that, as from the future, the Restoration differs in this respect from the past. The Elizabethan age had not as yet organized, according to definite standards, the life of those who provided its intellectual pleasures. The comparatively easy career of Shakespeare, as an actor and poet who had risen from humble circumstances, ought not to blind us to the fact of the suffering and struggles of so many of his contemporary writers. Literature at that date, despite the rich contribution of new blood, on the whole saw the continuation of the privilege which men of birth or wealth had possessed before. But with the Restoration the conflict becomes more acute between the regulations governing social life, and the demands of free literary creation; because it strengthens for a time the oligarchic character of society; because it confines more

rigorously to one class the authority in matters of taste; and also because it withers up and cramps the very idea of artistic values.

The result is that until the end of the seventeenth century

and, in fact, also goes to explain, most often, their at least

recruited from among the ranks of the middle or lower *bour-*

But the men of letters who are without social standing or fortune cannot live by their pen; the printing, publishing, and selling of books are not controlled or protected by commercial customs or laws; the idea of property in art has not yet been conceived; lastly, the reading public has not yet been formed. Each writer chooses a patron, either permanent or temporary; he flatters him, dedicates his writings to him, celebrates the events of his family life, and in return is the recipient of gifts and alms. In that struggle for existence, there is left so large a margin to the caprices of chance, that the victims are numerous; and among these must be counted, not only mediocre writers of all kinds, but also authors whose talent is of the best.

6. *Themes of the New Literature.*—It is under these diverse influences of the moral as well as of the social surroundings that the literature of the Restoration takes its rise. Many links connect it with that of the preceding age, no more here than elsewhere can it be said that there is evidence of an

absolute cleavage. We have the same men writing before and after 1600; those who have waited for the return of the king in order to write, have breathed the air of the Republic; those who preferred exile not only have been influenced by foreign modes of living, but in the coteries of the emigration have felt the radiation of an ideal elegance and spiritual preciosity, in which survived the very soul of the Renascence in its declining phase. Despite the gap represented by the Republic, it is not only in an official and fictitious sense that Charles II succeeds Charles I. In a deeper plane, the initial stages of a literary evolution had already unfolded themselves, announcing and preparing for the new age; themes had been sketched out, innovations attempted in form; so that neither in their inspiration nor in their art or language do writers after 1660 differ radically from their predecessors. Overlapping this date on either side, certain schools develop, just as others die out. Lastly, the apparent break with the moral past conceals the working of a need for psychological renovation which, through the permanent action of one and the same motive power, constitutes the solidarity of periods, just as it produces their diversity.

But rarely has a literature found itself more openly in reaction against the general spirit of that which preceded it. In the light of a rational ideal become conscious, the Restoration judges the English Renascence, and finds itself, for many reasons, frankly superior. It is elsewhere that it looks for its models: in the classics of antiquity, or in those of contemporary France. It adores Beaumont and Fletcher, venerates Ben Jonson, and is not devoid of a certain admiration for Shakespeare, although grieving at the latter's defects. But the development of the national literature since the Middle Ages seems to be in the eyes of the Restoration a slow progress towards a maturity of form, of which it itself is at last the happy herald.

What are the moral forces that can vitalize this literature? The newly restored régime pretends to bring with it the gift of order to society, and that of peace to men. Very soon there will rise against it a feeling of violent opposition; but the years in which the tone of the Restoration first reveals itself are years of political tranquillity. The artificiality of cultivated manners tends to alienate all thought from the preoccupation of the concrete, and from any suggestion of popular sentiment. A sort of detachment inveigles literature away from what is

practical, just as from what is subjective and sentimental. Indeed, until the time when the strife of rival factions will again become active, there is little else than the passionate pursuit of matters intellectual to animate the creative impulses of writers; and even then, it will be little else than mere party or sectarian zeal.

A central and relatively simple quality of rationality is therefore refracted, according to the various temperaments and circumstances, either along the lines of analytical and descriptive research, going from science to realism; or in the criticism, more or less serious, of human acts and motives, where it runs from parody and comedy to satire. Analysis and reasoning, realism, criticism, comedy and satire: such are the main features of literary activity during the Restoration. There it is that this activity is seen, not only at its best, but [illegible]

[illegible] allegorical verse, the Restoration, certainly, can show many tentative efforts. In these kinds it often achieves creditable success, and certainly individual temperaments even come to shine in them brilliantly. But the distinctive life of this literature is not there; and one feels that these modes of ex- [illegible]

[illegible] follow 1660?

7. Thwarted Tendencies.—From 1660 to 1688, two literary currents are flowing at different depths, without merging the one into the other. The first, by far the greater, spreads itself out in the sunshine; it represents the tendencies, the works, that are in intimate harmony with the spirit of the epoch, and alone truly belongs to it. The second appears on the surface at long intervals only; it continues the past, and announces the future. Judged by the inspiration which animates it, and by the spiritual characteristics of which it is the expression, it is in flagrant contradiction with the physiognomy of the age. It corresponds to the moral needs of a whole variety, and the most common, perhaps, of the national temperament a variety that is being eclipsed, but at the same time has not ceased to be.

The greatest work in English literature during the reign of Charles II is, undoubtedly, the *Paradise Lost* of Milton, and

this poem, as imposing as it is solitary, is foreign to the movement surrounding it. In the same way, the *Pilgrim's Progress* of Bunyan seems to belong to another world. And if Milton has to be regarded as a survivor of the preceding age, Bunyan, by the circumstances of his life, cannot be separated from the years in which he suffered for his religious beliefs. He belongs indeed, to the half-century when mysticism is repressed into the inner sphere of dreams.

Works such as these, and others which resemble them, can no doubt be explained as the inevitable exceptions to the standards set up by every generalization in history; and one is able to see in them, despite their aesthetic value which is often eminent, examples of those irregular and erratic facts, which set up, round the well-ordered domains of human development, the salutary margin where the complexity of things moral still reigns supreme.

However, the psychological interpretation of literary facts has to go farther. That a personality such as Milton's, formed for a number of years, and nurtured by other influences, in another atmosphere, should preserve the tone of its individual self after the world to which it belongs has disappeared, and that *Paradise Lost* should appear during the sceptical and dissolute reign of Charles II, is undoubtedly little else than what one might call a normal paradox. But in addition to obviously belated writers, such as the blind poet, the Restoration contains an appreciable quantity of literary expressions irreducible to the dominant forces at work in the epoch. Veins of moral dissidence traverse the very substance of its structure. This and that accent, this and that outburst of inspiration reveal a quality of soul, a spontaneous manner of thinking and feeling, that is quite out of harmony with the tone now tyrannically imposing itself everywhere; and this lode as it were runs through the whole period. It can be easily recognized in the personality and the work of the writer who dominates, and who is the best representative of these times, John Dryden.

Strictly speaking, therefore, one must only attribute quite a relative value to the standards by which the character of each age defines itself. In so far as each of these excludes contrary characteristics, it is subject to countless exceptions; and these exceptions themselves come within the normal rule, for they are in keeping with the true life of the spirit. Inner development consists in a progressive enrichment; each phase transforms the preceding one and adds something to it, but

transforms it in such a way as not to destroy it. In spite of the decisive manner in which it breaks with the past, the Restoration is unable to forget the Renascence. Not only does it preserve in its innermost self this subconscious remembrance, but it also possesses the other's creative faculties in a

it shows through here and there; it awakens, more pronounced, more intense, in such and such an individual mind; briefly, it continues to exist, and the chapter of isolated writers, as in all the epochs of a literary rhythm henceforth fully constituted, is that in which are best seen the essential continuity, the reciprocal penetration, of the states and moments of collective consciousness.

8. *Political Unrest: 1688 and the Transition in Literature.*— The study of the literature of the last forty years of the seventeenth century has to take into account, besides the Restora-

Revolution of 1688, the setting up of a new régime, and the diverse signs of a reaction in public opinion against the manners and special modes of the Restoration.

These two groups of facts follow each other, and are in a direct line the one with the other. The first sketches a revolt of national instinct against the absolutism and Catholic leanings of the Stuarts; the second accomplishes and develops the triumph of this revolt. The elements of distinctly moral nature which are interfused, after 1688, with the political motives, are already perceptible in germ about 1678, in the opposition of the 'country party.'

From the literary point of view, these deep and vigorous movements of the national mind bring about certain progressive changes in the inner quality to the Restoration.

literature, as of English life, is changed. It can be said that

the last years of the century form a distinct period; a brief but well-marked transition, separating the Restoration from the age of classicism.

These is some advantage in studying this transition by itself. On the contrary, the new tremors, keener and deeper, which since the reign of Charles II disturb the passive frivolity of the Restoration, have no literary influence independent enough to call for separate study. They only supply certain useful elements in the individual explanation of the 'dissenters' in this literature.

Thus the Restoration is entirely open to the future. Neither artistically nor psychologically does it suffice unto itself. It inaugurates modes of consciousness at once simple and clear, but cannot exclude different ways of feeling; it tends, as if in the throes of some internal uneasiness, some secret feeling of unrest, to a more balanced realization of itself, to a more harmonious order, which will be seen in the more developed forms of classicism.

To be consulted: Barrett Wendell, *The Temper of the Seventeenth Century in Literature*, 1904; Beljame, *Le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre, etc.* (1660–1744), second ed., 1897; Bredvold, 'Dryden, Hobbes, and the Royal Society' (*Modern Philology*, xxv, 1927–8); Cazamian, *L'Evolution psychologique et la Littérature en Angleterre* (1660–1914), 1920; Charlanne, *L'Influence française en Angleterre au XVIIe siècle*, 1906; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vols. iii and iv, 1903; Elton, *The Augustan Ages*, 1899; Garnett, *The Age of Dryden*, 1895; Gosse, *From Shakespeare to Pope*, 1885; idem, *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, 1889; R. F. Jones, *The Background of the Battle of the Books*, 1920; Stone, *England under the Restoration*, 1923; Taine, *Littérature anglaise*, vol. iii, 1866; Upham, *French Influence in English Literature from Elizabeth to the Restoration*, 1908.

CHAPTER II

DRYDEN AND LYRICAL POETRY

1. *Dryden: the Man and his Career.*—The study of Restoration literature must begin with the poetry. This traditional order is here incontestably justified: form now comes into the foreground of the art of writing, and it is in poetry that the elaboration of form is carried farthest. In this domain the

foremost a poet. Dryden,[1] by his example and precepts, has exercised the widest influence; he has furnished the models, as well as the doctrine, of a more careful art, in which the technique of verse is an essential element.

His personality, robust, and yet mobile, somewhat difficult

Studies), 1925.

to grasp, is better explained in connection with the changing background of his life. The national character in him is strikingly apparent. He was born in the heart of England, of a family which had come from the north, and which for centuries had taken its place in the most central, the most typical of the English classes, the rural gentry. The hereditary title of baronet which it possessed, however, must not give rise to confusion; Dryden never belonged to the nobility. In the civil and religious struggles of the day, the sympathies of his family were with the Parliamentarians. The outcome of these distant influences he developed according to his own law. His poetic vocation seems to have been neither very early, nor very eager until the moment of the Restoration —he was then approaching the thirties. He had made the death of Cromwell the subject of a funeral oration; he penned a triumphal hymn in celebration of the king's return; and from henceforth all his feelings and his acts show plainly enough that his royalist convictions were the true expression of his nature.

His life was that of a man of letters, still anxious to win the favour of the great, but assured of a dignity of his own, and on the way towards independence. Poetry, even in the form of occasional verse, is an uncertain source of income; the theatres, which had again opened their doors, offered a more rapid career to writers of talent; the stage attracted Dryden, and for fifteen years he was the most fertile of dramatists. Married in 1663 to the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, he became poet laureate in 1668, and later royal historiographer. A personal connection with the aristocracy, the support of the sovereign, and lastly success, seemed to vouchsafe for him a brilliant social position.

And such he enjoyed for several years, despite certain incidents. A poet of high rank, Buckingham, mocked at him disdainfully on the stage (*The Rehearsal*, 1671); another, Rochester, appears to have been the instigator of an ambuscade, in which he was cudgelled. The moment came, however, when the opportunity to play a part in politics was offered to him. The agitation caused by the Popish Plot, shortly before 1680, in the course of the troubled years which gave rise to the appellations of Whig and Tory, and the growing opposition of public feeling to the succession of the Duke of York, the Catholic brother of the king, prompted Charles II to enlist the help of the poet laureate. Whether or not the theme

his royal master, nparable verve to vailing upon the

thing permits of such a supposition; the more so when we

Dryden was buried in Westminster Abbey. Despite the reverses in fortune that had darkened his old age, his prestige remained intact; the Restoration had acclaimed him its greatest w respect. temporai the object of sharp criticism; the frequent note of aggressive fervour in his opinions, his religious and political recantations, the often licentious liberty of his plays, have shocked various susceptibilities; his memory has been assailed, and has had to be defended.

the contradictions, or rather the variations, of this character

The attractiveness of this expansive and sincere nature, capable of keen resentment, but without any base ill-feeling, is seen to even greater advantage if compared with that of the writer who will succeed to his heritage: Pope, still more classical, and more artificial, with whom the conscience and scruple of the artist will be pushed even farther, but whose fund of natural tendencies will be wholly suffused with equivocal subtleties and disturbing double-dealings.

2. *His Temperament: its Mixed Elements.*—A rich nature, gifted for easy creation, endowed with a sense of discipline and owing much to effort, but still more to a free and fruitful genius, such is the picture of himself left us by Dryden. In the march towards classicism he leads the vanguard, and arrives at what then seems to be the promised land; but he does not penetrate very far into it, does not settle there permanently, as will those to whom other horizons are unknown. He is still, as it were, a traveller, hankering after the great free stretches of landscape, and preserving his independence of mind. We must, therefore, recognize in Dryden the last and the greatest of the transitional poets who link up the Renascence with the classical age.

No solid inference can be drawn from the fact that he was born as early as 1631, that he breathed for a long time the atmosphere of the Republic, and reached man's estate before the Restoration. Other writers, without being younger in years, will prove to be more exclusively adapted to the new age. One must therefore fall back upon the individual, the inexplicable in Dryden. In his temperament, nature has sown the surest seeds of the literature of reason and order which is slowly evolving: the need for clarity, proportion, and rule, the architectural instinct, the gift of logic, the demand for a definite rhythm, for a symmetrical and distinct cadence; he is of his time, and yet outpaces it, guiding it towards the future; he possessed the divining sense of the harmonious and sober construction which the art of writing has to build up on the ruins of a brilliant and undisciplined fancy. But by the side of these elements are different and even contrary impulses; survivals, reviviscences of the past, impetuous flights of the imagination, the love of vigour, be it at the expense of careful correctness, a faculty of concrete vision, a taste for full and sonorous melody, a weakness for rare, sudden, curious felicities in thought or phrase. Many of the distinctive characteristics of the Elizabethan poetry, and all the

intellectual preciosity of the first half of the seventeenth century, are to be found again in the early Dryden; and if at a later date he overcomes his preciosity and disowns his juvenile errors, he nevertheless retains in his blood the glow of an ardour that is vanishing from his generation. The mature [illegible]

his first errors, and as he gradually elaborates his art, Dryden is happily served by the models he has sought out for himself. He has a sincere and keen liking for a form that is pure, for the neat line, for the even balancing of a whole; he feels that the [illegible]

very ideal that is only instinctively growing in his mind. In the school of the ancient and modern masters he catches the desire and adopts the habit of a refinement in taste; and under their influence his verse, his lyricism, and his dramatic art tend towards an orthodox classicism.

They were destined never to attain to it. With the full maturity of his years and of his talent Dryden in fact shows a return to standards of greater freedom; a kind of national reaction against the slavery to foreign rules. While he has brought the typical verse-form of the new poetry, the heroic couplet, to a high degree of perfection, he stops its progress short of the point beyond which the last margin of poetic licence, and the elements of variety that break the absolute regularity of the rhythm, would disappear. While he has written his plays in rhyme, he returns to blank verse. While he has extolled the unities as employed by the French, he justifies himself in not applying them rigorously. His pre- [illegible]

[illegible]

Chaucer. After twenty years' apprenticeship Dryden, in the fullness of his strength as of his talent, asserts the self-sufficiency of the type of art he has fashioned, and of which his greatest works are the illustration.

One might say that it is a mixed art; neither the pure classicism which Pope will endeavour to practise, nor the pseudo-classicism, tainted with decadent Romanticism, which Dryden had practised in his early poems; but a strong blending, in which the essential elements of discipline and of an accepted rule combine with the sovereign ease and boldness of inspiration. That vigorous quality, that movement, that full sonorousness of the great satires, of the odes, and the best portions of *Aureng-Zebe* and *Don Sebastian*, are not only the happy successes of an exceptional talent, they are also the examples of an adapted but native art, wherein English poetry would have found, perhaps, the model of a national classicism. It is a style of compromise and of personal but legitimate synthesis, in which the soundest and truest liberties of the romanticists are grafted on to a general background of order and choice; a mongrel style, as has been said of its application to the theatre; but even there, the hybrid product has something to show for itself. It is an art that is aware, through a just intuition, of the relaxing and changes to which the doctrine of strict correctness must submit in order to be likely to live in England.

Thus, younger than Milton, less extraordinarily robust and secure in his inner originality, and more touched by the spirit of the new times, Dryden none the less describes a somewhat similar curve. He also, when once he has mastered his art, has tended, in self-commanding wisdom, towards greater liberty. In a very different plane of feeling and of poetry, living in the world and not outside of it, he has attempted more modestly the same high reconciliation. The strong fusion of logic and creative imagination which characterizes *Paradise Lost*, also constitutes at times, and no doubt in a lesser degree, the unique value of Dryden's work. His best achievements, in his plays, bring him fairly close to the imaginative, sober, nervous art of certain aspects of Shakespeare, as is shown in whole scenes of *Don Sebastian*.

This classicism, truly indigenous, made of a restrained and self-disciplined Romanticism, called for gifts that are all too rare; and the movement of thought was carrying a period of reason towards the full, exclusive realization of its type. Dryden's successors will believe that they are continuing his effort, but as a matter of fact they will relinquish it; they will disown all the past history of their literature; nor will they have the courage of their national originality. A whole century will have to elapse ere they regain it.

3. *Early Poems: Apprenticeship.*—The first poems of Dryden are interesting works. The promise of a great talent is revealed in them, from intentions, and a few actual features. But they are not decisive works. They show the faults of the past very plainly, and still more than those of the future.

Therefore, one must not read in them the triumph of the new school. These verses are devoid of any innovation; they continue a development that had then long been in progress, and that was scarcely to reach its completed stage until the publication, some twenty years later, of *Absalom and Achitophel*.

In most of these poems there is a frank display of extreme [illegible]

an intelligence whose ambition is thenceforward developing. The conquest of new provinces over the realm of the unconscious, such in these last years of the Renascence, as always, is the progress of mind. And this progress is here realized through a clearer perception of shades—of the subtle differences between things. By establishing curious and far-fetched relations between one object and another, by forcing comparisons, and straining the faculties of mental association to an excess, is not the intelligence best broken to its most supple play? This is felt by all; and from the end of the sixteenth to the middle of the seventeenth century, affectation in Europe becomes an epidemic, of which 'metaphysical' poetry is only a particular aspect. The intellectual forces of the mind are beginning to realize their latent power, and spend themselves thus in the deft, brilliant handling of images; the drill in mental refinement, necessary for the moral analyses to which the century of classicism is about to devote itself, is inseparable from the exercises of the imagination, with which it still remains entangled. And the pleasure which comes to the mind from these sleights renders it insensible to the protests of judgment and cooler reason.

A passage in the verses penned by Dryden at the age of eighteen to mourn the death of the young Lord Hastings, his schoolfellow, is very often quoted, and deservedly.[1] About 1650 the uncertainty in matters of taste is still such that there

[1] Hastings died of an eruptive malady. 'Each little pimple,' the poet tells us, 'had a tear in it, To wail the fault its rising did commit.'

is nothing exceptional in prettinesses of this kind. Dryden here imitates Cowley, whose daring intellectual fantasies were just the lure that a young imagination can hardly resist. During the thirty years that intervene between this first effort in verse and the great satires, English poetry will rid itself of almost all this exuberance. The action of the French model, at once purer in form and more moderate in tone, will have a large share in this change, but no less efficient will be the inner progress in Dryden's own artistic perception.

And this progress is very soon noticeable. The stanzas written in memory of Cromwell have an oratorical swing, a vigour, a note of sincerity, which it would be unjust to question; in the person of the Protector, it is the greatness of England that is venerated by Dryden, and whose fatal eclipse he here mourns; he will always be a very ardent patriot; at the same time the errors in taste, and a somewhat laboured awkwardness, still show the apprentice at work. *Astraea Redux* has a greater sureness of touch, more solidity, an animated flow that is skilfully sustained, but again the poem has many inequalities. *Annus Mirabilis,* despite its faults, is the strongest work of Dryden in his first manner of writing, and here he reveals himself the undoubted master of the new poetry.

Certainly preciosity, the 'metaphysical' devices, as it will be said [1] of the school to which classicism is about to put an end, are not absent from this work. A succession of episodes and brilliant passages, the poem can scarcely be said to have any real unity. It falls very low at times. But the inspiration which sustains these three hundred four-line stanzas has an undeniable vigour. While the imagination of the poet too often goes wrong, it shows at other times a striking power of evocation; and despite the somewhat short movement of the measure, the whole of this diversified narration is enlivened by a touch of historical and even epic emotion. The choice of the images is now suggested by old-time authors, whom Dryden imitates or adapts in his capacity of a faithful humanist; now, and usually with greater felicity, by personal and direct vision; as, for example, the comparison of the hare and the hound worn out by their running (stanzas 131–2), which has an appealing force, and a tone of raciness. The picture of the fleet and of the sea battles is lively and picturesque, but the reader feels in it the presence of a certain

[1] Dryden himself in 1693 invented this epithet, and applied it to Donne; Pope, and especially Johnson, set it in vogue.

improvisation, and a lack of experience; that of the city where the noisy crowd is swarming in the glare of the conflagration, is worthy of its great theme. The final perspective of London rising again from its ashes has a fine amplitude of vision; and the style, by an instinctive harmony which reveals the born writer, supports these intense passages with accents of solemn, full dignity.

Dryden has brought the English classical line to its perfec- [illegible] early poems, are written in this measure: here Dryden shows himself to be the worthy heir of Waller and Denham; despite some hesitation still, and a few serious errors, this form of verse has already the firm strength of an implement for poetic argumentation, the use of which reinforces, one through the other, the regular sureness of the measure and the balanced lucidity of the thought. This weapon for irony and controversy will be again employed by Dryden in his great satires and didactic works. But he has a sense of other melodies, and freer; his ear, during these years of apprenticeship, seems to be haunted by the purely lyrical rhythm of the quatrain with alternate rhyming lines. *Annus Mirabilis*, and the [illegible] of a long poem, it serves the elegiac intentions of the writer with much felicity in particular passages. All that there [illegible] to the same instincts.

4. *The Lyricism of the Years of Maturity.*—This does not mean to say that the phase of Dryden's career when he concentrates on drama stifles this vein of spontaneous lyricism, in which his temperament is still linked up with that of the preceding age. Here and there in his plays are scattered short songs, light and, at times, inspired stanzas, which then have the soaring happiness, and a touch of the charming youthfulness, of the Cavalier poets.

The satires and didactic poems, from 1681 to 1687, display a complete mastery of versification, a quality that is more easily felt than defined. Technical analysis can hardly by

particular features to offer: the greater p
flexibility, a margin of variation in the r
few incomplete lines, ending at the hemis
rines, the persistence of the triplet or serie
a single rhyme, which metrists will readily
with its effect of a lengthened utterance,
and provisional conclusion, is often a hap
the remarkable freedom of the pauses, v
movement of the thought. But it is in t
that one must look for the deep source of tl
vitality which is the animating force in th
Created in one and the same act, the meas
equally forceful, compact, easy, striking,
the poet possesses itself freely, and moves
brilliant, vivid ideas, and because the form
dress with which these are spontaneously

Dryden's satires belong to a group of
would be as well not to separate them (se
didactic poems rank among the most succ
thankless kind; the vigour of his genius
possessed to a supreme degree of reason
verse, and his religious zeal, newly awaken
life, raise the debate above the arid pla
versy most willingly lingers. *Religio La*

were, powerfully naïve sincerity, a nervous and subtle argumentative skill, which the poetic cadence sustains and does not appear in any way to hamper, all make of this unequal work one of the eminent expressions of Dryden's genius. [illegible]

170[illegible]

inspiration struggling to express itself, with an attention to style that is often too minute and artificial. The Pindaric model, as interpreted by Cowley, supplied the English poets with a pattern at once solemn and somewhat arbitrary, which tempted the pens of all but a few writers of the time. *Threnodia Augustalis*, to the memory of King Charles II, and *Britannia Rediviva*, composed on the occasion of the birth of the future Pretender, the son of James II, are official exercises of the poet laureate; there is, however, in the first piece, written not without vigour, in very ample stanzas, and in lines of extremely unequal length, a general impression of order and proportion that is pleasing enough; the orchestration has movement, and the harmony swells or fades with brilliant virtuosity. More spontaneous of note, the famous *Alexander's Feast* is a still somewhat too clever masterpiece in imitative [illegible]

in form, and of a more communicative musical beauty and sweetness. But it is perhaps in a piece of a more personal character, the *Ode to the Memory of Mrs. Anne Kill*[illegible] [illegible]

which are full of an ardour and a grandeur of lyric vision, in which we feel the breath of modern Romanticism, while they recall the mystic exaltation of the sacred poets of the seventeenth century.

The moving appeal of this ode; the attractive note of more tl[illegible]
E[illegible]
a[illegible]
noble dignity with which the aged Dryden hails the rising glory of Congreve, or, dealing with the charges of Collier against a corrupt stage, strikes a balance between their exaggerations and their justice, without forgetting his own

respected. The nervous and full conciseness of the expression lends to the whole a very pleasurable quality; and while the translation has the freedom, the very relative accuracy, which were satisfactory to the taste of the time, it transposes the rural poem into a tone that is not in absolute dissonance with the original. At the worst, one notices, as in the *Bucolics*,

the Latin satirists reveal a penetrating finesse. But when he comes to speak of the writers of his own country, his judgments evince the same insight. He has a natural sanity of taste, a sound and straightforward perception of the deeper character of men; and from the very first one feels that if his

work. Prepared thus for broad and direct criticism, Dryden strengthened this gift by providing himself with the extensive, but in no wise systematic, culture of a scholar; he never acquired erudition.

Despite their deficiencies and their weak points, his treatises supply the first model of the kind in England. Their doctrine is that of the French classicists, but inflected in a modern and national sense. The influence of French critics, such as Le Bossu, Rapin, and later Boileau, is less paramount on Dryden

submission to independence. The imitation of nature and truth, the model of which was supplied by the ancients, and which any novice can learn in their school, the identification of literary

(*A Defence*

of Dryden.

however, an original feature, in that it insists readily on the shades of difference which time brings to the fundamental

Dramatic Poesy, may have exhausted one kind of perfection; they have left us another. In the quarrel between the ancients and the moderns, though Dryden does not side with

the innovators, he cannot be said, on the other hand, to agre with the exclusive patrons of tradition. He is not afraid o saying that Chaucer is greater than Ovid. Full of the doc trine of the ancients, he bends it to a free and fruitful adapta tion; and his creative instinct outruns and explains away th last scruples of the thinker.

Such is indeed the character of his maxims on the art o playwriting, which we find scattered here and there, which ar somewhat wavering in their doctrine, but whose unity reside in a very definite central line of evolution; and of his idea on the precise problems of poetry. About rhyme, which h strongly defends, and then gives over for the theatre; abou the various rhythms, language, and the unities, which he ha interpreted in a broad sense, Dryden has spoken as one fo whom the destiny of English literature lies in finding, throug the same paths as French classicism, a golden age which th genius of the Elizabethans, despite its marvellous intuitions did but approach; but in whose opinion the example of thes old masters is both salutary and indispensable, because the have written and thought according to the profound instinct of their race. Such verses as those in which Dryden extols against the 'regular and thin' perfection of French art, agains the characteristics of the French language 'weakened by over refinement,' the vigour of the English 'more capable of viril thought' (*Epistle to Motteux*), show to what extent the con sciousness of national originality reaches deep and is irreducibl in the mind of Dryden. Briefly, his doctrine, while it i rationalistic, is also realistic; accepting the fact of the in dividuality of a people and of its genius, it limits thereby th dangerous authority of pure reason.

6. *Lyric Poets of the Restoration.*—Among the contemporarie of Dryden, with writers whose personalities are less robust the characteristics of the new age are more rigorously i evidence. The Restoration poets, on the average, are les complex by nature, and are less deeply linked up with national tradition. They are dominated by the influences o their day: that of an age of dryness, when the natural out pouring of a singing soul tends to become a paradoxica exception; and that of an aristocratic and artificial society in which only such themes are favoured as harmonize with th fashionable scepticism of a life of pleasure.

Almost all of noble birth, the rhymers of madrigals, treatise in verse, and odes, who wrote in the dazzling and frivolou

[illegible]

conformity with it, the official measure of literary values was registered during the eighteenth century in those voluminous anthologies which, neglecting a 'barbarous' past, have transmitted to posterity the least poetical efforts of an age of culture. Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, accepting this tradi-[illegible] feel [illegible] e and [illegible] tives of English poetry have undergone a thorough change; and the courtier rhymers of the years of the last Stuarts have fallen to the rank of mere curiosities for the scholar.

This condemnation, a little summary, must in its turn be revised. Over the secondary poets of the Restoration, singularly shifting lights, no doubt, have been brought to play; under the changeful ray, many figures that formerly attracted notice have vanished into darkness; while others, whose features have been lighted up by a more generous curiosity or a more active sympathy, have assumed a more marked and new relief. On the whole, a better advised criticism nowadays tends to tone down such exaggerated discredit by many exceptions.

The dead parts of this literature are traceable chiefly to impulses that are wholly intellectual. Three main themes are dominant: gallantry; the sustained dignity of an abstract argumentation; the vehemence of a philosophic ardour. Love poems, didactic poems, 'Pindaric' poems, whether they seek animation and wit, reasonable cogency, or the sublime, are all chilled by the same cold atmosphere. Passion is scarce in them, and feeling exceptional; scarce also is the heat of a strong imagination, that can grasp the realities of the soul [illegible]

learned compositions of Cowley's imitators make up one of the most unprofitable chapters in the history of incipient classicism. A Sprat,[1] a Montagu, Earl of Halifax,[2] for long made a figure with their ambitious efforts; but they are now unreadable.

[1] Thomas Sprat (1635–1713), Bishop of Rochester and historian of the Royal Society: *Poems*, Chalmers and Johnson's *English Poets*, vol. ix.

[2] Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax (1661–1715): *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. ix.

Not less disappointing is the vein of the authors of treatises in verse. But these do not aim at any laboured and merely verbal sublimity; they are only plagued with dryness; their calm inspiration leaves room for the successful care of form. Since translating the ancients is in fashion, the Earl of Roscommon[1] composes a rhymed essay on the art of translation in verse, and himself renders in blank verse the *Ars Poetica* of Horace. The Duke of Buckingham[2] writes an *Essay on Poetry* that finds great favour among his contemporaries; and not without reason, because it represents in fact a very creditable grouping together of average qualities, while providing a clear and pleasant exposition of sensible ideas with a limited scope. There is no work that better reveals the implicit postulates, the deep-ingrained prejudices of this generation; the pursuit and the realization of beauty are wholly governed by rules of wisdom, prudence, and judgment. Imagination, the creative energy of the writer, do not seem to be taken into account.

The love theme, and its usual vehicle, the madrigal, are everywhere in evidence. Here the needs of the heart are paid but slight attention, and delicacy is too often put to shame; for the superficial lightness of the emotion only serves to cover a rather heavy sensuality. On the other hand, these mediocre strains have at times a pleasing turn. There is still a certain aristocratic quality about this literature of gallantry, so inferior to that of the preceding age, but in which a gift for language still persits. A will to refinement, and the influence of recent English or French models, are added to a natural distinction, and gloss over the poor quality of the matter. All the talents that court life demands—wit, the ready and correct reply, the care of expression, clearness of thought, regularity in the metrical arrangement of the line—give to these exercises in verse a polish that bespeaks elegance and good taste.

But only a polish . . . Just as the wit is at times forced, so the politeness is often only a mere outward show. In comparison with the light verse of the seventeenth or eighteenth century in France, that of the Earl of Dorset,[3] for example, betrays an intimate difference in quality. It is

[1] Wentworth Dillon, Earl of Roscommon (1633–85): *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. viii.

[2] John Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire (1648–1721): *Essay on Poetry*, 1682; second ed., 1691.

[3] Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, Earl of Dorset (1638–1706), author of light poetry and satires: *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. viii.

not entirely of its own choice that it is amiable and well-bred. Its amenities are strangely contradicted by flashes of violent realism. And truly one is at a loss to know whether in all these a
outbreaks of
discordant n
very candour.

But there is no gulf separating the Restoration from the great lyrical century of the English Renascence. The one is the continuation of the other, and prolongs its decline. Now that these old collections of the courtier poets have been

may appear to have been effaced or concealed, but which nevertheless secretly subsists, suddenly reappears. In the pages of these worldly rhymers, there are moments, touches

expression; he has an 'inevitable' neatness of phrasing, lively, running rhythms, which ironical or artfully sensual inspiration seems to have created on the spur of the moment. He dashes off many a little masterpiece, of a kind in which

[1] John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647–80): *Collected Works*, ed. by J. Hayward, 1926. See J. Prinz, *John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, his Life and*

Sedley, 1929

kept an exceptional talent; and the spirit of a more conscious classicism gives a more finished turn to his creations, without depriving them of their freshness.

On the other hand, a literature of witty cynicism or frigid gallantry can have a poetry proper to itself; and this resides in the lucid and somewhat dry, but sincere intensity of a bitter, disillusioned outlook on life. The pessimism of intelligence wells out in the midst of all this feast of the senses, and there are notes which arrest us by the force of their truth. What Rochester has written is never indifferent; because he has amongst them all a manner that is at once the most French, the most elegant, and the most skilful; and because in his work there crops up a fund of clear-sighted observation, a scepticism with regard to the ambitious hopes of reason, a something that recalls Butler[1] and at the same time announces Swift. His *Satire against Mankind*, a free and original imitation of Boileau, is a piece of *bravura* in which we detect a serious intent. The ease of his argumentation, the neatness of his epigrams, realize at times the ideal itself of classical poetry: the incisive, cadenced expression of a perfectly clear idea. He stands out from among all the poetasters and fast livers of his class through the acrid distinction of a mind which intense and free experience precociously destroyed, but not without refining and sharpening it.

No epoch can be said to be morally simple and one. Just as this generation has its echoes of the Renascence, its reminiscences of a lyric past both ardent and youthful, it shows as well some premonitions of the future. Nahum Tate,[2] a *bourgeois* poet, conscientious and mediocre, who had the honour of collaborating with Dryden in the second part of *Absalom*, reveals to us, before 1688, the temper in which the moralizing literature of the next age was shaping itself. His pointless verse owes its interest to this documentary quality. There is a touch of sentimentalism in his lines, a virtuous indignation, a hint of the facile pathos in which the eighteenth century will delight. Certain poems, as, for example, his *Melancholy* or *The Midnight Thought*, anticipate Young. His psalms in verse enjoyed a long popularity. And those elements that will go to nourish the first silent preparation of Romanticism are here perceptible. . . .

[1] See further, Chap. III, sect. 2.

[2] Nahum Tate (1652–1715): *Poems on Several Occasions*, 1677; *Psalms in Metre* (by Tate and Brady), 1696.

it is Flatman,[1] in the best passages of *Retirement* or of his funeral dirges, who best justifies the existence of this bastard kind. And with that he possesses a faculty of effusion, natural enough to succeed occasionally in turning out madrigals, of a haughty and severe style that recalls the school of Malherbe. A poet, when talent prompts him, he often falls below himself; for the quality of his verve is very unequal, and reflects the essential instability of successful lyricism in an age of prose.

And yet, a literary age is an abstraction. Upon a complex and changing woof, in which the threads of the past interweave themselves with those of the future, each period, as it were, stands out in a dominant and simple tone. This unity is not an illusion; but it exists above all in the mind that seeks

pon more careful

h is, particularly,

literature. The

psychological elements of a subconscious Romanticism are

a middle class, that has remained in great part immune from the corrupting influences of the aristocracy.

vol. ii, 1908.

[1] Thomas Flatman (1637–88): *Poems and Songs*, 1674 See Saintsbury, *Minor Poets, etc.*, vol iii, 1921; F. A. Child, *Life and Uncollected Poems of Thomas Flatman*, 1922

CHAPTER III

SATIRE AND THE SATIRICAL SPIRIT

1. *The Restoration and the Satirical Spirit.*—The great influences of the time unite to make the Restoration an age of satire. A society where the various forms of worldly life are in the ascendant raises to its highest point the respect for conventional values; and while orthodox morality suffers an eclipse, fashion and genteel taste in return hold undivided sway. The rational tone of thought helps to disentangle and formulate all rules; and the clearness of the principles renders their application more easy. Judging and condemning, as a result, grow more simple and more facile operations. In the exclusive circle of the cultured, the art of expressing one's judgment in literary terms becomes a highly natural exercise of the critical faculty; and the appeal to enlightened opinion is an unfailing means to acquire prestige and success.

On the other hand, with the re-establishment of the monarchy there breaks out an insurrection of instincts that have long been held in check; the revolt against austerity is accompanied by a reaction against hypocrisy; and the spirit of mockery or of satire brings with it to those consciences that are becoming liberated the feeling of sincerity, as well as that of independence. The open denunciation of false spiritual authorities becomes not only a duty, but a pleasure; and if with the desire for sanity there mingles the relish for licentiousness, if the audacity of thought, and the frankness of utterance, deviate into cynicism, this is only a reaction so natural that no one is tempted to wonder at it. The Restoration satirists are most often realistic and crude, just as they are biting to a degree; for, generally speaking, they are not very sure whether they are writing in the name of morality and in its defence, or against it, against the notion that others have formed of it. . . .

Political strife also accounts for the violence of tone. The Civil War, and the Protectorate, had known the most violent polemics; Milton had fought as desperately as any other. But in the controversies of the various sects, the vehemence sprang from the earnestness of the passion and the idea. The

Restoration materializes and lowers even these conflicts.

ardour which formerly spent itself in fulminating and learned treatises, now pours itself forth in lampoons and satires Henceforth, Whigs and Tories will engage in a paper war for the benefit of public opinion.

But there is something else at work in the literary atmosphere of the time. Classical influences favour a mode of expression which the tradition of the ages has consecrated. In ancient days the satirist was honoured; the study of the classics is now promoting familiarity with the works of Persius, Horace, and Juvenal; these old masters are translated and imitated; did they not aim their shafts at the eternal enemies of wisdom, and was the man of those days in any way different

writing, that in England could claim the precedents of Hall and Donne.

Whether sustained by a popular inspiration, and springing from the conflicts of social life, or the outcome of a reflective impulse, satire in England will enjoy until the close of the

under the Restoration, it will often disclaim any personal intent, but will almost always deal in personalities; and the relative sincerity of the satirical impulse will create new forms for itself,

2. Sam the life of th in Butler, with the result that one of the most interesting figures of this age remains in many respects an enigma[1]

The first and very great success of his work is closely bound

[1] Samuel Butler, the son of a small landowner, was born in 1612 in Worcestershire, studied at Worcester Cathedral School, and did not enjoy, it would appear, the privilege of a university education, but acquired his very wide scholarship

up with the Restoration itself, and points to an immediate harmony with the tastes of the cultivated public, the greater part of which by far was hostile to the memory of a defeated Puritanism. The long interval which elapses after the second part, the indifference which greets the third, the silence and neglect into which Butler seems to have fallen, betray both the uncertainties of a poem which, proceeding with no definite plan in view, remains an unfinished work and the new preoccupations that are absorbing the minds of the time, after all the mockery and cynicism of a dawn which had seemed to herald a golden age.

In the days of the Civil War, when people were massacring each other, 'they knew not why,' we see Sir Hudibras, the grotesque and corpulent knight of a hot-headed, quarrelsome cause, sallying out in company with his squire Ralph, who rides at his side. The first is a Presbyterian, the second an Independent; and their continual arguing recalls to life again an epoch when sect opposed sect in endless strife. Sprinkling their mishaps with mutual sermons, the two cronies ride forth to court adventure; pursuing a showman with his bear, who stirs up all the Puritan ire of Hudibras, now victorious, now defeated, cudgelled, imprisoned, liberated, they pass from episode to episode, just as it pleases a story which the poet himself does not take seriously. Sir Hudibras falls in love with a widow, and after receiving learned advice from an astrologer, suddenly vanishes; and nothing remains of the forgotten plot, save the powerfully grotesque figures of the two heroes, those of some secondary characters, and the outpouring of a satirical and critical verve, which is the only source of unity in the poem.

---

from his reading; occupied several subordinate posts as scribe or clerk in the employ of Elizabeth, Countess of Kent, and of Sir Samuel Luke, a Puritan squire in Bedfordshire. He was a student of law, and a keen observer of contemporary manners, which are put to ridicule in his poem. *Hudibras* appeared shortly after the Restoration (first part, 1663; second, 1664; third, 1678), and met with great success, although the author, lauded to the skies by the court for a time, scarcely seems to have reaped any tangible reward. After an old age spent in retirement, and perhaps in poverty, Butler died an embittered man in 1680, leaving behind various works in prose and verse, which were published without any guarantee as to their authenticity in 1759 (*Genuine Remains, etc.*), and which present problems still unsolved. *Collected Works*, 2 vols., ed. by Waller, appeared in 1905–8; third vol., ed. by Lamar, 1928. *Hudibras*, ed. by Grey, 1744; ed. by Johnson, 1893; ed. by Milnes, 1895. See Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. iii, 1903; H. Craig, 'Hudibras, Part I, and the Politics of 1647' (*Manly Anniv. Studies*), 1923; Garnett, *The Age of Dryden*, 1895; Lamar, *Revue Anglo-Américaine*, February 1924; J. Veldkamp, *Samuel Butler, the Author of Hudibras*, 1923.

A poor imitation of Cervantes, with certain traits taken

Puritans, but drowned in a series of interminable discourses—such is the first impression one has of the structure of Butler's work. The poem as a whole can find no support even in the principal characters; very minutely depicted as to their out-

attract our sympathy nor incur our hatred, for they have no human quality. Each feature of their moral being is an

harsh, fully conscious of its powers and master of itself, it gathers itself up into strokes of incomparable concentration, even if their indefinitely repeated series produces in the long run a feeling of monotony and dispersion. The substance of

feminine, exaggerated, ironical, macaronic even, embroider over this ground of compact regularity a pattern of luxuriant impertinence. The inventiveness of Butler in the province of rhythm, although restricted to a narrow field and to dry effects, yet without an equal in its own kind, has produced

varied, and of a very mixed quality; the finest elements *mingle in it with the coarsest; an erudition as huge as it is* incongruous feeds it with the drollest allusions, while the author's keen moral observation enriches it with a profound

sense of all the aspects of a soul's self-deceit. Never have the innermost recesses of subconscious egoism, or of that folly in human nature which is quite unaware of itself, been so cruelly explored and revealed. Presented in formulae of a piquant compactness, this bitter experience is spontaneously amusing, and deftly plays with the wit that lies in words as with that which lies in ideas. But the restraint it constantly exercises over itself, its power of cold and apparently impassible expression, the delightful discrepancy that continually enhances the comic value of things, through their incongruous, indirect, and transposed presentment, lend to the whole poem an undeniably humorous character. A fertile inventor of puns, epigrams, and lashing mockery, an expert, like Rabelais, in the full-flavoured art of vocables, Butler is also one of the masters of humour.

That is to say, his work has in it a wealth of intention, a fund of thought, only revealed by way of an implicit suggestion, and which is not easy to thoroughly explore. The philosophy of *Hudibras* works itself out in several successive planes; and its contours are difficult to determine. The work is first of all, and undoubtedly, a scathing indictment against the Puritan régime, and against the moral temper upon which it had been raised. Sensual and cowardly, pedantic and covetous, Sir Hudibras has in him all the weaknesses of the flesh, whilst his vain pretension to the virtues of conscience is the most ludicrous hypocrisy. His grotesque pride as a magistrate is in keeping with the obstinacy of his squire, who is a mystic enthusiast; and the one like the other brings to the service of his sectarian zeal a cunning glibness of tongue and the arrogance of a demented arguing power. The hostile picture of a religious, political, and social age is complete in these two types, and in their reciprocal reaction. But a kind of inner logic carries the satire much farther. As if he obeyed the need of unreserved self-expression, Butler develops to their utmost range the themes he has here set himself to treat; with the result that very soon it is no longer a question of one single epoch, or of one doctrine; the poem becomes a general criticism of society, of thought, and of man.

The links connecting up these digressions with the main subject are to be found in the central theme of insincerity of Puritan affectation. This latter is disguised in a special pedanticism, a biblical jargon, as well as in a pretended austerity of manners. In the mind of Butler a fusion takes

place between the pedantic lie of theological Puritanism, and all the vain pretensions of human science. The suggestions of certain literary models, the example of Rabelais, all the enthusiasm of modern rationalism, which for a century had been gradually growing stronger, and rising against the [illegible]

exercise of thinking, [illegible] and vanities; the fa[illegible] everywhere by false [illegible] governments, social forms, institutions, rules of life, nothing can withstand the merciless inroads of the most corrosive intellectual bitterness.

Where does Butler lead us? How far does the sly vigour of his destructive jeering want to go? To absolute scepticism, or to a prudent and moderate good sense? To unrelieved pessimism, or to a disillusioned wisdom? It is doubtful whether he himself has a very clear conception of the limits of his denials, and of the positive affirmations at which his thought may still snatch. Among the diverse works attributed to his pen, those whose authenticity is beyond all doubt throw [illegible] dissipate all [illegible] are satires, a[illegible] indeed that [illegible] supple, less uniformly strung up to wreak a will of irony [illegible] scorn. It seems as if the rage and intoxication of seeing through all things had not withered away all his convictions; nor does he appear to have experienced like Swift, whom he seems to herald in so many respects, the maddening sense of solitude in a barren moral world. If he has upbraided all religious denominations, he seems to imply, and indeed he [illegible] festation of his love for the true.

Are these solutions final, or only temporary? Is his thought

pledged to them, or are they but the calculated decisions of his sense of utility? One has the impression that, all things considered, Butler maintains an attitude in which is visible that English fund of practical empiricism, of which 'pragmatism' is but the present form; that he accepts as lesser evils the intellectual or social necessities of life, and submits, in a certain measure, his uncompromising need of truth to their discipline. But this is a joyless resignation; and although one must not be led to see a Romanticist in Butler, one's ear catches in his work an accent that is unmistakable. Emerging in his mature years into an atmosphere of rationality, but obsessed by the recent experience of a vast collective fit of unreason, he exhausted himself in denouncing a past even then abolished. He repeatedly struck at dead enemies, Puritanism and scholasticism, without being able to turn towards a future which his intellectual temperament was especially suited to understand. To this bent of his thought he owes the violent character of his satirical genius, the main feature of which is an ironical sneer at everything; and it is in this light that one must view him, without stopping at the partial abdications to which his free critical sense, under pressure of vital exigencies, had to consent. He thus retains the character of an incomplete, but original and robust artist; of a thinker arid, but strong, and singularly modern.

3. *Political Satire: Marvell, Oldham.*—Under the Restoration the domain of political satire is vast and crowded; and only the scholar can explore all its corners. Great names, brilliant or powerful works stand out above a multitude of pamphlets and invectives, which in the most varied forms express one and the same fund of virulent enmity; where intense words fail to give any artistic relief to the monotony of these outpourings of hatred.

It is the art of the satirist which alone counts here. The contemporaries, struck by the wealth of this production, have gathered from it the collections entitled *Poems on Affairs of State*, in which satires are intermixed with pieces of different character, and of unequal interest. Among their very diverse themes, there are heard the outbursts of a vigorous impassioned inspiration, that of a seething anger against the absolutist and Catholic tendencies of the Stuarts. All the genius of a Dryden, thrown on the side of the monarchy, cannot prevent the confused instinct of an irritated people from voicing itself in even louder tones; and another writer—

Andrew Marvell—from lending a poetical expression to this instinct.

Marvell belongs to the preceding age in English literature.[1] A belated survivor like Milton, he preserves in the midst of the children of Belial the forceful energy of a character that has been tempered by Puritanism. His satires, by virtue of the definite occasion which called them into existence, are part and parcel of the Restoration and must be connected with it.

This occasion brings together three poets of the transition in which the new literature develops from the old. Waller,[2] a courtier poet at heart, had celebrated an English naval victory, and attributed its triumph to the reigning dynasty (*Instructions to a Painter*, 1665); Sir John Denham[3] had [illegible] caution—then abandoning all reserve, he launches until his death (1678) a series of attacks against the foreign policy of the king, and the scandals of public life or of the court. Unable to disclose his identity, he has to circulate these pamphlets anonymously, either in manuscript form or in loose sheets, and to hide his main purpose under the veil of allegories. But the personality of the author reveals itself in most cases, and the pulsating ardour of his feeling shines out [illegible] influence was spreading obscurely. As if the new spirit in poetry supplied him with his instrument of expression, Marvell writes most often in heroic couplets; but his unpolished verse, capable of surprising vigour, has not the necessary suppleness or regularity, and rather reminds one at times of the

[1] Andrew Marvell (1621–78). See Part I. *Satires*, ed. by Aitken, 1901; *Poems and Letters*, ed. by H. M. Margoliouth, 1927; P. Legouis, *André Marvell*, etc., 1928. There would seem to be serious doubt as to the authenticity of several among the satires attributed to Marvell.

[2] Edmund Waller (1606–87): *Poems*, ed. by Thorn-Drury, 1893. See Part I.

[3] Sir John Denham (1615–69): *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. vii. See Part I.

of promise. They present a compromise between the scholarly and the popular types, but nearer to the former. There is movement in them, a vigour of tone somewhat uncontrolled, a monotonous accumulation of effects that repeat but do not always reinforce one another; and, at the same time, a brilliance, a felicity in details, an energy of expression that can [illegible] nguage, [illegible] ieve the [illegible] Loyola denounces the monstrous secrets of the Jesuits with a simplicity that is naïve to the extreme; however animated and coloured the pictures, they cannot lend any artistic value to invectives where the touch of Juvenal is everywhere apparent, and yet does not destroy the evident sincerity of the writer. A passionate nature, prone to brutality, with sensual impulses, a relish for honest purposes, a descriptive, concrete verve, Oldham attracts the reader and holds his interest more by virtue of the virile character of his personality than by the actual merit of his poems.

If in these pieces, and in the rest of his satirical work, [illegible] preached, but which no one realized in his generation; yet he has always developed particular subjects into wider themes, which his slightly declamatory rhetoric knew very well how to use to advantage (*A Satyr addressed to a Friend, that is about to leave the University*; *A Satyr upon a Woman, etc.*).

4. *The Satires of Dryden.*—Dryden was over fifty when he wrote his great satires.[1] His genius now possessed all its vigour, and he was the master of perfect poetic expression; [illegible]

[1] *Absalom and Achitophel*; first part, 1681; the second part, 1682, is by Nahum Tate (see Chap. II, sect. 6; the portraits of Doeg and Og are by Dryden); *The Medal* and *MacFlecknoe*, 1682 Our knowledge as to the latter poem, its date, etc., is under revision. See *Review of English Studies*, i. 187–190; P.M.L.A., Sept. 1932.

these poems are not of one single kind. Personal conviction, no doubt, counts for much among them; the crisis of the Popish Plot had given a definite turn to opinions and classified men; Dryden, following his tastes and the deliberate tendencies of his temperament, sought the side of the monarchy, just as he was soon to embrace a dogmatic faith. Suspicious of Shaftesbury and of the principles with which the popular cause identified itself, he is led to denounce the most dangerous partisans of this cause, the middle-class Whigs of the town (*The Medal*). Against his former friend, Shadwell (*MacFlecknoe*), he had many grievances: a now manifest divergence of political opinions, the antipathy of an artistic nature as against a vulgar temperament, the legitimate resentment following a personal attack (*The Medal of John Bayes*, 1682). But at the same time, he does not forget that he is supporting the cause of the king, and that he writes with the connivance of the court. A poet laureate should show both skill and self-command if he is engaged in strife during his tenure of office.

This is the explanation of the superiority of art in Dryden's satires. At times the violence of his tone is equal to that of his contemporaries; he has praised Oldham, in some fine lines, for having known, like himself, how to hate strongly (*To the Memory of Mr. Oldham*, 1683). He even confesses that he could hardly trust the susceptibility of his own temperament (*Essay on Satire*). But his mastery of expression allowed him in any case a scrupulous attention to form; and the fire of his inspiration is tempered by the full and clear consciousness of the artist.

Must one add to these honourable reasons certain motives that are less noble? Is the very noticeable manner in which Dryden spares Shaftesbury to be taken as a precaution on the part of the author, in view of a possible turn of fortune? The passage in which the magistrate, distinguished from the meddling politician, receives a tribute of praise, was introduced into the poem after the triumphant acquittal of one whom the court sought to ruin. It is not impossible that Dryden should have been influenced by the trend of circumstances; his sincere esteem for certain traits in the accused could not be easily expressed when he himself was pursuing the latter's condemnation; a favourable verdict, contrary to the expectation of the court, restored to the poet part of his independence. There is no necessity here to find Dryden

guilty of baseness; but it must be recognized that he did not seek to rise above the part of political agent, which the royal favour called upon him to play.

The matter of Dryden's satirical work is not original. No theme was more generally familiar for the purpose of satire than the utilization of biblical personages and scenes. In 1680, a hostile pamphleteer likened Monmouth to Absalom; in 1681, a satirist had dubbed Shaftesbury an Achitophel. In this ready-made frame, Dryden displays all the classical power of form. Aided by a clear and well-thought-out plan, his construction acquires an architectural quality, of which English literature, leaving Milton aside, had offered few examples since the instinctive creations of Shakespeare; though the intellectualized art of Dryden, to tell the truth, does not quite rediscover in its integrity the intuitive secret of the logic of life. Despite an inner order and true progression, the poem betrays some uncertainty, a development that is not balanced in every part. But the details are worked in by a touch that is broad and free, with a wonderful infallibility. A rich concrete verve plays with the trick of anachronism, and extracts from it all the relish of its effects; the irony of the satire, at times indulgent and fraught with good nature, at others much more severe, controls [illegible] work, penetrating the reader and winning his sympathy; behind the attractive but misguided son, and bathed in a doubtful light of ridiculous or ominous hue, stand the crew of the fomenters of revolt, dominated by the equivocal, mobile countenance of the evil counsellor. This energy of persuasion is further enhanced by the argumentation of the story, and by the speeches, in which everything with admirable unity converges to the same end.

This art, of almost unexceptionable clearness, but robust and coloured, and by no means timid, but reaching sureness through vigour, is chiefly concentrated in the portraits with which the work abounds. In these we admire the very fine [illegible] logically linked traits. Nowhere else do we find so free a

display of Dryden's classicism, enriched and set off as it is by a romanticism of the imagination.

The style illustrates both. Here are all the qualities, for the most part negative, with which the progress in literature had identified itself for the last generation; a just accuracy, a guarded fitness; the fever of intellectual imagination is now appeased, and with it the 'conceits' have disappeared. A kind of virile instinct guides the inventive genius of the writer, directing it towards alliances of words and ideas in which brilliancy and novelty harmonize with the demands of taste. But all the central warmth, all the imaginative ardour subsists; it acts as an animating force within the expression itself, imbuing it with energy, vividness, and vitality. Condensed in brief evocations, in sober, striking images, the power of poetic suggestion is here to be found in its fullness, in no way impeded by the exercise of the writer's critical judgment. And one feels, in fact, that the mind of the poet does not act in a double capacity; that his critical faculty and his creative verve do not impair each other, because they cannot be distinguished one from the other. The style of Dryden, in his most decidedly classical pieces, is above all an inspired style; its purity and its firmness, just like its force and its lustre, are due to the unique felicity of a nature in which spontaneity had become synonymous with art.

It has been rightly said, also, that Dryden's satirical vein owes its outstanding quality to the fact that it represents—better and more profoundly than in the case of Oldham—a reconciliation between the scholarly ideal and popular inspiration. It remains popular because of its biblical setting, its imaginative theme, its direct allusions, and the portraits to which the reader could always attach a name. It is scholarly by virtue of its deportment, its relative moderation, the choice and the dignity of its expression, the generality of the thought, and that standard value, that impersonal significance, which Dryden has vested in the individual and at the same time representative figures of Zimri, Achitophel, and Shimei.

Although a literary triumph, the poem had missed its immediate political end; it was hailed by a host of answers and parodies. The cause which it had served, however, carried the day a year later, and Shaftesbury had to seek refuge in Holland. Towards the end of 1682 there appeared a second part, published like the first anonymously, and in no way

called for by the plan of the first. It is the work of a writer other than Dryden, but he had inserted therein two very fine

this shapeless, many-membered body becomes a monster, a hydra of anarchy. Political reasoning now invests itself

with the sovereign good humour of a merry giant, strong enough to conquer without strain and bitterness, remains the particular feature of this poem.

Transposed, of Elkanah Settle (1682). One sees here how much

the reach of

aviness their

ent, and has

forcible lines; but an unbearable sense of boredom emanates from this ponderous narrative, overloaded with names, encumbered by too many allusions, in which Dryden's ironical

thods are turned against himself with a pertinacity worthy better success.

t will suffice to enumerate here, and in passing, the various ds of popular satire during the last twenty years of the enteenth century, and to recall their close connection with political incidents of the day, the most important of which he Revolution itself of 1688. These ephemeral writings, h few exceptions, bear the traces, either in substance or form, of imitation of the masters of this literary kind—rvell, Oldham, and Dryden. They keep for the most part certain favourite themes, such as the apologue drawn from Bible, the dialogue, the portrait or 'character,' the apition of a ghost. Thus, from literary forms polished by talent of a Rochester (*The History of the Insipids*, 1676; *the Young Statesmen*, 1680), or animated by the vigour of a rvell, one descends in quick transition towards the 'litanies' l ballads recited and sung at the street corners, which ed their popularity to simple, taking measures, or to tunes t were in vogue. One of these refrains, *Lilliburlero*, nished almost the whole nation in 1688, when James II l, with one of those rallying signals that help public sentint to crystallize, and thanks to which decidedly mediocre es may be immortalized.

i. *The Theory of Scholarly Satire: Influence of the Ancients.*—e *Hudibras* of Butler is not a regular satire, but a mock-oic poem, full of scornful irony. Marvell had paid scant ention to traditional forms, and had voluntarily brought his gh apologues within the range of the language and instincts he people. Dryden, writing on behalf of the royal cause, or order to avenge himself upon Shadwell, had allowed his ve to flow freely into the mould which the usual forms of temporary imagination offered. Oldham alone, in spite his political intentions, had taken care to respect the classical dels of satire. In his way he had re-established the dition of Hall and Donne.

And yet the models of antiquity had never enjoyed greater stige, nor exercised more attraction. If their effective uence has not been more constant upon the masters of the le at this epoch, it is because political inspiration, inter-gling irresistibly literature with life, was directing the ter towards free and new forms, more in keeping with public timent, which had to be solicited.

This does not mean to say that the forms of antiquity were

parison betwen Horace, Juvenal, and Persius, the upshot of which is that Dryden, while feeling a greater esteem for the

appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave, without using any of

the Christian charity that had become very conscious within him, Dryden condemns the personal element in satire. Lampoons, such as are written so profusely, he says, are a dangerous weapon, and he himself of set purpose has disdained to reply when he was attacked. . . . Nevertheless, to retort

must put us on our guard against one single vice, must extol one single virtue; the tone shall be lively and pleasant, with

comes dangerously near a sermon, and tends to become a purely artificial form. So strong is the authority of the classical ideal, derived from the ancients, that Dryden does not dare to recognize and hail the very life of satirical inspiration where it is to be found: in the works of a Butler, a Marvell, or in his own writings. . . . He only places his *Absalom*, modestly, in the line of Varro. The artificial kind which he recommends will only be saved from mere imitation by *the systematic use of anachronism, by frank and strictly*

modernized adaptations of ancient themes. This will be Pope's method, and already Rochester and Oldham have essayed it. But Dryden thinks that he ought to repress the guilty inclination which carries the modern reader towards parody; if in his Juvenal this 'fault which is never committed without some pleasure,' has not always been avoided, it is a licence wherein he excuses himself, and which he reproved in principle. . . . In fact, he does not take very great pains to avoid it.

His critical judgment, therefore, appears here to be somewhat timid; his creative instinct was not hampered by all these rules. These, meanwhile, were showing their sterility among his contemporaries. The 'regular' satires of this age are far from equalling, either in number or in value, the free expressions of the satirical spirit; and almost all of them relieve their commonplaces with personal allusions. Oldham is the only notable exception. Another writer, if we believe Dryden, would have equalled or even surpassed the ancients: Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset,[1] to whom the translation of Juvenal is dedicated. But this is one of those extravagant statements to which even a Dryden was led by forced adulation. The *Epistle to Mr. Edward Howard* and the *Satire on a Lady of Ireland* are witty, biting poems, not free from harshness or indelicacy, quick in movement, pleasing in form, but devoid of any serious originality. Their scope, besides, is exclusively individual.

The *Essay on Satire* by John Sheffield, Duke of Buckinghamshire,[2] unwittingly confirms the conclusions suggested by that of Dryden. He also, bowing to the authority of a moral propriety which classicism turned into a law, explains the high ideal of an impersonal satire, and interweaves with his reflections the most plainly wounding allusions to persons. . . .

Much rather than to Buckhurst, Dryden's praise might have been given to Rochester; a man against whom, it is true, he too justly could bear a grudge. In the *Satire against Mankind*,[3] in the *Allusion to the Tenth Satire of the First Book of Horace*, the criticism of moral or literary values is raised to a height of true impersonality by a writer of vigorous thought and penetrating judgment, without the least touch of abstract banality; and if the mockery of Rochester is elsewhere of the

[1] See above, Chap. II, sect. 6.
[2] See idem. [3] See idem.

most galling harshness, it possesses a natural quality of form, an elegant distinction, that lend it a lasting artistic worth.[1]

6. *The Diffusion of the Satirical Spirit.*—In order to complete the study of the various expression of the satirical spirit, the stage also would have to be taken into account. The Restoration theatre, is, in a sense, and in its most brilliant

traits of Senator Antonio. Throughout the whole of this theatre, the prologues and epilogues are constantly made the occasion for allusions and mockery.

Thus quick with life and spreading everywhere, the spirit of satire will be bequeathed by the Restoration to the classical age.[2] It will be at the root of all the work of Pope and Swift;

loftiest aims of satire; but without the critical spirit, that subtle and all-pervading leaven, concentrating itself within the narrow bounds of any one kind. In vain will talented writers, such as Young, make supreme attempts to revive in England the general, reasoning, and solemn type of satire, the eloquent denunciation of vice, the persuasive exaltation of virtue, according to the recipes and formulae of the theorists.

To be consulted. *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol vii, Chap. VII; vol. viii, Chaps. II, III, VIII; G. Murphy, *A Bibliography of English Character-books, 1608–1700*, 1925; idem, *A Cabinet of Characters*, 1926; Previté-Orton, *Political Satire in English Poetry*, 1910, H Walker, *English Satire and Satirists*, 1925; A. H. West, *L'Influence française dans la poésie burlesque en Angleterre, 1660–1700*, 1930; see studies on Butler, Marvell, Dryden, Oldham, etc.

CHAPTER IV

THE THEATRE

1. *Limits of the First Period.*—The greatest literary activity during the Restoration is to be found in the sphere of the theatre, and the authors of comedy form, perhaps, the most brilliant group of writers in their epoch, and one which best illustrates its moral features. On the other hand, they outshine their immediate successors. Therefore histories of literature usually take the Restoration dramatists as a centre for the study of the English theatre at the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, the classical age being, so to speak, in this domain, a weaker continuation of that which precedes it.

If one looks at the subject from the point of view of the evolution of kinds, there may be some advantage in not separating the successive phases of a movement which extends over some fifty years, and which, taken altogether, forms a natural whole. Comedy in particular—that of Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar—would appear to represent an unbroken series of connected works. But if the history of literature is brought into close contact with that of thought, and looked upon as an aspect of the total development of a society, this linked succession must be broken up, leaving room for a division that is more logical, and historically better founded. In reality, a generation separates Wycherley from Congreve.

The break, in the interval, is marked by the Revolution of 1688, with the moral changes which accompany it. In every respect English literature between 1688 and 1702 forms a period of transition; both in inspiration and in style, it then bears the stamp of a special character; and each literary kind reveals the influence of a spirit akin, no doubt, to that of the Restoration itself, but still different from it. In order to understand this period, it will be useful to view it as a whole.

The dates 1660 and 1688 therefore, for the time being, limit the field of this survey. No doubt the dramatic career of Dryden is not wholly contained within those years; but the five plays with which this career ends, between 1690 and 1694, may be connected quite naturally with the twenty-

three which have preceded them. The works of Dryden, Etherege, Wycherley, Lee, Otway, together with those of their immediate contemporaries, constitute properly speaking the theatre of the Restoration.

2. *The Beginnings: D'Avenant. Foreign Influences and National Tradition.*—The Puritan Revolution had closed the

stage most certainly was impatiently borne by many; but the

with the royal cause, obtained permission to open to the public an 'allegorical entertainment by declamation and music, after the manner of the Ancients' (*The First Day's Entertainment at Rutland House*). This first and discreet attempt—rather hazardous, however, if one stops to ponder over certain remarks of Aristophanes, the advocate of theatrical art—was followed the same year by a more ambitious show, *The Siege of Rhodes*.

One of the main influences that are preparing a new phase in dramatic art is here clearly apparent. D'Avenant had resided in France; he had come into contact there with an artistic and literary atmosphere rich in suggestions; that of the

and the Scudérys, which were already popular in England; lastly, a taste for the opera, which was being implanted in France with the Italian performances under Mazarin, and with

[1] 1606–68; *Dramatic Works*, ed. by Maidment and Logan, 1872–4; see Part I. Studies by A. Harbage, 1935; A H Nethercot, 1939

the *Andromède* of Corneille (1650). And mingling with these elements, we find memories of the national theatre, under the form in which it was being kept alive, about 1640, by the degenerate disciples of Fletcher.

The first part of *The Siege of Rhodes* is divided into 'entries,' like the ballets of Benserade, which were the rage at the court of the young Louis XIV. It is written in rhymed verse, in a very free and variable measure, adapted, as the author tells us, to the demands of the recitative, then a novelty in England. As for the subject, it is 'heroic,' and destined to recommend virtue 'under the forms of valour and conjugal love.' A naïve sincere ardour, in which one feels a youthfulness of spirit, despite its self-consciousness, animates this romantic work, clumsy in places, but at times raised by the lyricism of honour and passion. It can be regarded as the germ both of English opera and of heroic tragedy. While the scenic displays, the wealth of accessories, the striving after great picturesque effects, the 'machines' (on a narrow stage the town of Rhodes, the port, the fleet, and the camp of the Turks had to be presented either together or successively) were not unknown to English dramatic art before 1656, it is none the less true that through its material figuration also the play caused a sensation, and marks a date. Lastly, if it is not a fact that an actress appeared in it for the first time in England, it is certain that an English actress played one of the leading parts, and that this daring and almost unprecedented step became a common feature of the Restoration theatre.

Before 1660, D'Avenant wrote two other plays of the same kind, and tried, by selecting national themes, to prevent the possible revival of Puritan susceptibility. When the king's return brought with it the liberty of the theatre, he with Thomas Killigrew was given charge of one of the two troupes of actors, and one of the two playhouses, which were authorized by letters patent.

In order to understand the development of dramatic art under the Restoration, one must imagine these two companies, that of the king and that of his brother the Duke of York, gathering together talented actors, such as Betterton, and actresses, such as Nell Gwynn, whose charm as much as their stage gifts made them the idols of the public. Greedily attracted to long-forbidden pleasures, elegant society crowded to the plays, which very often were honoured by the favour and the presence of the king; the theatre now became, for the

daily
house,
of the
middle class, and where Pepys, a citizen of London, liked to rub shoulders with the upper world and to catch a glimpse of the king's favourites, is one of the main social centres of this age, just as it is morally its most complete symbol. The passion for an art, rendered the more pleasing because it has in it the value of a protest, expresses a political preference,

explain the cynicism, and the success, of a literature that is singularly free, crude in its boldness, insolent in its self-assertion, and seeming always to pursue, over and above the direct expression of itself, the confusion of an abolished

desire for a more perfect civilization converges from every side. Classical tragedy in France shines with a bright effulgence; translations have already revealed Corneille to English readers, and soon the tragi-comedies of Thomas Corneille, the heroic tragedies of Scudéry or Quinault, the comedies of Molière, and

Dryden, the daring refinements of the metaphysical poets, and the lyricism of the Cavalier poets, well show in what direction the inner trend of contemporary thought is setting.

Thus, heroic tragedy itself is not exclusively the result, in England, of French examples; it has its true roots in the evolution of the national mind. D'Avenant, before the triumph of the Puritan Parliament, and before his stay in France, had written masques for Charles I, and the English masque may be regarded as one of the origins of the opera. He had written dramas in which the exalted inspiration of honour and love made itself felt (*Love and Honour*, 1642, etc.); he puts them on the stage again after the Restoration, and their tone chimes with that of the new theatre. The first plays of Killigrew (*The Prisoners, The Princess*, etc.), performed before the ban upon the theatre, appear as stages in the same transition.

The courtiers of Charles II, besides, do not only look with favour upon the plays written to flatter their preferences, but extend a welcome to the repertory of the English Renascence. No doubt, it is partly through necessity that, from 1660 onwards, Fletcher and his predecessors are again taken up: was not theirs a fund with could be drawn upon, while waiting for the poets to bestir themselves? On the other hand, it is only too certain that the taste of the epoch judges and classifies the masterpieces of the great dramatists from a strange angle of vision. Beaumont and Fletcher are favourites with the public; Ben Jonson, the particular idol of scholars, and praised on every occasion by the critics, follows them very closely. Shakespeare, whose greatness is only felt by a few, pleases the crowd by the secondary aspects of his genius; he is disconcerting to an average though educated mind, such as that of Pepys, more often than he is a delight.[1] The limits of incomprehension seem to be reached when theatrical managers and authors rival one another in adorning *Macbeth* with ballets, or transforming *The Tempest* into an opera. Dryden himself calmly shared in these profanations. The successes won by the Elizabethan drama under the Restoration seem due, very often, to the superficial resemblance of its Romanticism with the cheaper fanciful instincts of the time; to the appetite of

[1] *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is 'the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life' (29th Sept. 1662). *Othello* was only 'a mean thing' after *The Adventures of Five Hours*, by Tuke (20th Aug. 1666).—For Pepys and his diary, see below, Chap. V.

a public eager for sensations, rather than to a sincere understanding of its inherent qualities. But when all is said, this drama was there, revived again and again, recalling itself to eye and ear alike; the soundest sensibilities were able to [illegible]

[illegible]

of a long development, and unites the most diverse influences —those that have just been enumerated On the other hand, the writer who best knew how to manage this form—Dryden —attributes its most direct parentage to Sir William D'Avenant, in *The Siege of Rhodes*.[1] But D'Avenant, he says, has not had the ability or the courage as yet to pursue his effort to its end; he has not given his play all the wealth of incidents, the boldness of plot, the variety of characters, which an heroic poem permits and demands; now, heroic tragedy is nothing else than a poem which has been made manifest to the eye [illegible] just as [illegible] attain t[illegible] human life. And the measure of the play will be the rhymed couplet, which has won a place for itself on the stage, and will henceforth rule over tragedy. It has been said that rhyme is unnatural, and distant from actual conversation: it is therefore all the more fitting, in order to raise actions and images alike above the banality of everyday existence No doubt it has its difficulties; but no one is forced to express himself in rhyme; and such as have been refused this gift will be wise if they abstain from attempting its beauties or incurring its risks

The Siege of Rhodes, revised, increased by a second part, [illegible]

[1] *An Essay of Heroic Plays*, prefixed to *The Conquest of Granada*, 1672.

Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, whose *Henry V*, *Mustapl* *Black Prince*, written in rhymed couplets, were pla uncertain dates between 1662 and 1667; and Sir Howard, Dryden's own brother-in-law, with whom laborated in 1664 in a play which some regard as tl really complete heroic drama (*The Indian Queen*). in 1664 Dryden himself had produced an example, thou of the same kind, yet of the most closely related, tragi-c in *The Rival Ladies*. He was to come back to this on occasions in the course of his career, and even down last years (*The Maiden Queen*, 1667; *The Spanish Friar* *Love Triumphant*, 1694); but for a time, it is upon tragedy, properly so called, that his effort is almost excl concentrated; and in this we find his most brilliant *The Indian Empress*, 1667; *Almanzor and Almahide*, *Conquest of Granada*, in two parts, 1669 and 1670; *Zebe*, 1675.

It is easy enough to judge these dramas, provid examines them in themselves, and avoids comparing the the very different ideal of French classical tragedy. Tl first and foremost, Romantic; in this sense, they would a mate to the English theatre of the Renascence; bu Romanticism is impoverished by the exclusive preocc of producing a single kind of effect, just as it does not being shackled, for all that, by the new attention to If one had to look for analogies in Elizabeth's time, they be found in the *Tamburlaine* of Marlowe, rather tha where else. The aim of these plays is to give to sen imagination, and the senses strong impressions of a su and superhuman grandeur. In France, Corneille als true, had based tragedy upon admiration; but he had the intellectual quality of his Cartesianism into the e of a soul overwhelmed by the beauty of noble sa esteem, with him, was the fruit of a reason sublimat moral passion, and in this way it bound up the de the heart with the decisions of conscience. And hero merited our entire sympathy, it was because his ness was a conquest, the reward of a cruel struggle himself. All this subtlety and, it must be said, this id are absent from Dryden's notion of heroism; this, no does not resolve itself completely into mere physical

[1] In the preface to his *Maiden Queen*, Dryden presents the play

and great strokes of the sword; but its spiritual value seems to depend chiefly upon the lack of any struggle, and upon a victory immediately won over nature and the flesh.

Such a shifting of the centre of gravity gives back predominance to imagination and sensibility; and even with an Aureng-Zebe, the most inward of Dryden's heroes, the one in whom virtue is endued with the most distinctly psychological quality, one can say that generosity is the inborn and purely impulsive gift of temperament. It is not certain but that this view may be after all the truest and the deepest; but here it has scarcely any philosophic value, as it is not the outcome of any deliberate choice; and above all, it has hardly any dramatic worth; its repeated affirmation, at moments of supreme crisis, rouses our admiring wonder, rather than it touches us with a heartfelt admiration.

Other consequences are of a still more serious nature. If

cause it is afflicted with an unconquerable monotony. Excluded from the core of the work, as from the characters, the

drama have always given them. Finally, the style has to suffice for effects of intensity, which the purely moral force of conflicting sentiments cannot any longer supply; so that nobleness tends towards bombast, and vigour towards frenzy.

emanates from these dramas; they transport the mind into a domain of superiority that is somewhat unreal, but where it is not unpleasant to let oneself be persuaded that one actually penetrates; life there has splendour and beauty; the suggestion of generosity which radiates from it may very well be hollow: in its intention it is true, and while it is felt to be illusory, one yields to it in a certain measure A sincere Romanticism is never entirely a question of words, the reader

of these plays finds himself moved at times, and moved in a manner that is inspiring. Lastly, the diction is almost always sonorous, often firm and nervous, with a dense, concentrated power which is evocative, just as much as it is expressive; it has even at times those sudden flashes of poetry which, lighting up the drama, reveal such vast glimpses at one stroke. This style is by no means pure; it still drags along many a trace of bad taste—conceits, affected tricks of all kinds. But it is the style of a great writer, who, if he has not yet mastered his best form, is already himself.

The brilliant success of these dramatic ventures, in which he had no rival, despite the account to which his competitors turned some ephemeral stage triumphs, seems to have inspired Dryden with a feeling of confidence in his own powers, which at times got the better of the sureness of his critical judgment. The dedication of *The Rival Ladies* to Lord Orrery (1664) not only justified the use of rhyme in tragedy, but even went to the length of recognizing in it a useful and necessary check on the exuberance of the poet's imagination.

No doubt, the celebrated *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), in dialogue form, of never-flagging interest, brings to the discussion of the problems of drama the breadth of view which Corneille had exemplified in his *Examens* and *Discours*. Here Dryden shows the most original and permanent groundwork of his thought; that realistic understanding of the special qualities and claims of the English national art, in which his incertitudes were finally to find rest. He explains here very skilfully the diverse aspects of the truth; the advantages of the ancients, and those of the moderns; the foundation of the unities and of the rules in nature, and the eminent virtues of the French theatre. While he borrows something from all those theses, including the last, he pays a warm tribute to Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson, and praises them, not only for their substantial accord with the rules, but also for the free genius which has permitted them to find these in themselves. Nor is his justification of rhyme in any way dogmatic; it was not necessary, he says, to our fathers, if we prefer it to-day; and its relative constraint answers to the self-ruling emotion of a more conscious art; the rhythmic scheme, besides, must be free, varied by enjambments and half-lines.

But the epilogue to the second part of *The Conquest of Granada* flatters the public at the expense of the just claims of

the past: a more polished age knows merits which were unknown to a rude epoch, and to a yet unrefined language; a Dryden is a better poet than a Jonson, since his audience demands more from him. . . . These remarks having called forth some epigrams, Dryden repeated his argument in the *Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age* (1672), in which

championing a form of art which, he affirms, is 'the most pleasing that the Ancients or the Moderns have known,' Dryden does not rise above the common thought of his time.

critical spirit of a rational age; while the first tendency, here rather superficial, is a survival of the past, the second is in deep harmony with political and moral realities, and has the future on its side. Great sentiments and paraded virtues form a strange accompaniment to the mockery of *Hudibras*. The frivolous, sceptical public which relished Butler, without always understanding him, and which applauded the light comedy of the Restoration, could not raise itself for long,

offered itself as a broad and defenceless target for ridicule. Soon after 1660 George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham,[1] formed the project of writing a satirical play in which the bragging note of the new drama would be scoffed at; he had collaborators, among whom, it is said but without any solid proof, was Butler himself. D'Avenant or Sir Robert Howard was, at first, to be parodied; but the repeated triumphs of Dryden pointed him out as a fitter object for attack, and it is he especially, under the name of Bayes,[2] whom *The Rehearsal* (1671) assails.

The hero, Drawcansir, is a replica of Almanzor; very obvious allusions are aimed at the personages, situations, and

[1] 1628–87.
[2] i.e. 'laurels'; Dryden was poet laureate from 1670.

emes of Dryden's theatre, or of other writers. A work of ther mediocre fancy, devoid of any moral bearing or deep tistic motives, the play is often witty and amusing; some s have the direct accuracy which results from a sharp ception of exaggerations or incongruities; and the harmony he thesis with a certain average good sense lends it a force t it does not owe fully to its merit. Hateful and ridiculous, portrait of Bayes is too scathing to harm Dryden, who wise enough not to see himself in it. But despite its rility, the comic vein in *The Rehearsal* sprang from the nature of things, and served its purpose.

did not kill heroic drama. For ten years, said Bucking- we have listened to rhyme, and not to reason: 'Pray let prove a year of prose and sense.' The wish was perhaps ed; but after an interval in which he had taken up in the defence of his Almanzor, Dryden wrote *Aureng-Zebe.* play, it is true, already marks a transition towards er ideal. In it the tragic element is purer, and one has been able to discover a distant influence of the sc Racine. Despite its numerous shortcomings, the st ten a classical restraint; the versification shows m n, and blank verse even reappears in places. T ter of Aureng-Zebe, with its nobleness and gentlen night without reproach, is almost a fine thing. (er hand, the comic elements are developing, less, in the direction of tragi-comedy, than towards tl iously imitated model of Shakespearian drama; th nding decidedly takes us away from heroic traged in the prologue, Dryden says that he is tired o confesses that he is full of shame 'at Shakespeare': ame,' and marks his own place between two periods , 'the first of this, and hindmost of the last.' The the deeper inspirations of national temperament be more clearly indicated.

cisive proof was not long in coming (*All for Love*, ut in a dramatic species akin to that which he d from now onwards, Dryden was still going to n interesting work. His career, moreover, follows line, full of such turns. *The Spanish Friar* (1681) e characteristics of tragi-comedy; two plots are n it, one principal and tragic, the other comic and (this latter, in fact, being here the better part of s it is the more developed); and Dryden justifies

this mixture in principle (Dedication of the work) by arguments in which is expressed the innate preference of English genius for the mixed forms of dramatic art. Besides, he upbraids the turgidness of a style that is falsely heroic, and

momentary variations of his thought, chiefly in the expression which he gives it, he has henceforth found a fixed centre to revolve upon.

Heroic tragedy, meanwhile, was reaching the final stage of decay, dying from an inner exhaustion which Buckingham's satire does not seem to have much hastened. *The Empress of Morocco* by Settle (1673) had been very successful; *The Destruction of Jerusalem* by Crowne (1677) did not reawaken

tradition.

4. *Comedy: Etherege, Wycherley, Shadwell, etc.*—Restora-

tastes. The spirit of comedy is essentially a social thing; it

lectual elegance, would make mockery fashionable: does it not call forth all the vivacity of wit, the gift of joking, the art

there is a revival of Ben Jonson's 'humours,' as much as of Fletcher's dramas. After several tentative efforts, Etherege and Wycherley create, in different but analogous moulds, the new type of comedy.

Before them, some attempts had been made, where most often is still felt the paramount influence of Ben Jonson, but where other traits are discernible, called into being by the new circumstances.

and lightheartedness; while the character of Sir Frederick Frollick is the first sketch of the impertinent young fop who is destined to be the favourite hero of Restoration comedy. *She Would if She Could* marks a decisive progress; the writer has found himself, and is conscious of what he wants and of what he can do. It is entirely and unreservedly the piquant mockery of fashionable vices, the occasion for a satire that is evidently working hand in hand with what it pretends to be engaged in condemning. The tone is still more cynical, the liberty of language more light and witty. Although the dissimulated coarseness only breaks out in sudden and brutal sallies, the abdication of all moral exigencies will never be more complete. *The Man of Mode* is the example of an art that has reached the perfection of its form, and in which the poverty of the matter, of observation, is revealed in a somewhat dry precision of outline. In contrast with Sir Fopling, the exquisite infatuated with French fashions, Dorimant represents a more subdued and more national replica of the same type; for already the reaction of patriotic instincts against the excess of foreign influence is here perceptible, as in the theatre of Wycherley also. But the coxcomb is buoyed up by a disdainful gaiety of ridiculous spirit, an impudent liveliness, which blunt the edge of comedy; and the satire is lost in the entertainment of a fastidious irony.

The resemblance to the brilliant, fine art of Congreve is striking; and one would be tempted to over-emphasize the fact, if one did not notice in Etherege a more forward note of disrespect, a more pronounced debauchery in thought, something younger, and also a less sustained brilliance. There is also a suggestion, in certain words, of a secret sense of the vanity of cynicism, and, as it were, of an ill-satisfied longing of the heart. But this is only in a kind of farther background, and scarcely perceptible.

Congreve was to take up the comedy of Etherege, and enrich it, raising it still higher. The inspiration which animates the robust and biting plays of Wycherley[1] is quite different.

[1] Born in 1640, in Shropshire, came of an old family, sojourned as a young man in France and frequented the salon of the Duchess de Montaurier, where he found an atmosphere impregnated by the spirit of the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Returning to England at the Restoration, he entered upon a life of pleasure in London. The success of his first play, *Love in a Wood*, staged in 1671, brought him into touch with the court. *The Gentleman Dancing-master* (1671 or 1672), *The Country Wife* (1675), *The Plain Dealer* (1676), followed in quick succession. Then Wycherley retired from the stage, contracted a rich marriage which proved disappointing, passed through a period of financial embarrassment, and

With him, satire remains just as far from an austere ideal, and lets itself be carried away by the enthusiasm of a gay immorality; but the game is no longer self-satisfying. The elements of an inner protestation show themselves: the revolt

is a violence in which can be seen, not an exasperated cynicism, but the impetuosity of a scorn, all the more frank in that it has no appearances to save, and does not except itself from what it condemns. It is the elementary moral reaction of a nature that is not wholly bereft of all sense of a moral life. To venture farther would be hazardous; nothing in Wycherley reveals a romantic sensibility; and his gaiety is not the ironical mask that would serve to conceal a secret melancholy. But one has too often erred in the opposite direction; one has only searched in his work for a baseness of soul and the cold desire of scandal. The coarseness of his plays is at once due to observation of manners, to the desire to please public taste,

fulfilled all the necessary conditions to give a true picture of a social reality that was limited, particular, but intensely characteristic: he was a man of the world, part and parcel of its life; and, on the other hand, his temperament had sufficient solidity to ensure him his independence, a personal angle of vision, distinct from that of the rake, similar enough to that of the average man. Less indolent and less of a dilettante
lours, and lends a
art emphasizes its
with a touch both
frank and insolent.

His comedy thus shows us a state of manners, the field of which, narrow in itself, requires defining—the court, the

fashionable circles of the capital—but the example of which radiates even to the farthermost parts of the provinces, and there creates, as it were, superficial contagions; attracts to it, on the other hand, moral elements of the same nature; and so plays well the part of that typical form of civilization in which an age can most often be summed up. Young noblemen, dressed in the French style, beribboned and bewigged, straining after wit and very susceptible about their honour; ladies for whom face patches and rouge have no longer any any secret, and provocative beneath the enigma of their masks; burgesses, as greedy as they are crafty, anxious, and not without reason, about the chastity of their wives; plays, pleasure haunts, fashionable groves and gardens; suggestive conversations, intrigues, billets-doux, and appointments—it is like a fairly brilliant copy, but overcharged and carried to a brutal licentiousness, of gallant life such as the personal tastes of Louis XIV encouraged. Wycherley has described all this in a lively, animated, coloured picture, no doubt intensified by the optics of the stage, but in no way exaggerated. There is skill and talent in the portrait, despite the fact that it is simple and even rough in its manner; and the painter has known how to bring in individual traits to set off general effects; how to catch, as for example in *The Gentleman Dancing-master*, the craze for foreign customs, French or Spanish; or, as in *The Plain Dealer*, the features of lawyers and of their victims.

The art of Wycherley, robust as it is, is often rudimentary. His plays have conspicuous faults. From the first to the last, no doubt, there is evidence of a marked progress towards the emancipation and purification of the form. The plot in *Love in a Wood* is of a quite superficial complexity, from which the succeeding comedies tend to free themselves. But the action is still moved by rather conventional springs, and develops according to rhythms that are expected and monotonous; the tricks of construction are crude. There is no very fine psychology in the delineation of character, and it is rarely that the personages cannot be summed up in one single trait. The best known, such as Widow Blackacre (*Plain Dealer*), are the puppets of too obvious automatisms. Finally, the author's numerous borrowings, chiefly those he has taken from Molière, enable us to make comparisons which are not usually to his advantage. Whatever may be thought of *The Plain Dealer*, it seems difficult to see in

it, as certain critics have seen, an improved replica of the *Misanthrope*

the verve which infuses an irresistible movement into many scenes, and draws new effects from banal situations. The dry-

And the pleasant, gay play of wit, in some episodes where the pleasure-seekers vie with each other in conversation, comes upon us as a kind of release, which somewhat softens the crudity of the rest. But the most original quality in Wycherley, and the surest sign of the secret idealism of his thought, is the philosophy which instils an after-taste of healthy bitterness into the cynicism, and makes the character of the Plain Dealer, despite everything, a strong and personal

matter; much more than the rather subdued character of Freeman, the Philinte of Wycherley, it is Manly, a brutal and ferocious Alceste, who represents the confused, violent depth of his experience of life.

Restoration comedy is a fruitful kind of literature. Society furnished for the amusement of an idle public certain general fashionable circles, to which rs belonged, and of the town the majority faithful to the spirit of Puritanism, and which the theatre shows us in the most malicious light. From those antitheses, and from the situations they naturally lead to; from the spectacle of elegant debauchery in its struggle with vulgar hypocrisy; from the theme of conjugal misfortune, above all, treated endlessly under all its aspects, are born the ordinary types of plot, to which the imitation of the foreign theatre brings the chance of renewal, and elements of particularity. Few of those plays are really of no value to the historian, so naïvely faithful is the testimony they bring concerning the manners or spirit of the epoch. A study of less limited proportions than the

present would distinguish in them, besides the comedy of manners—the most interesting—that of 'humours' derived from Jonson; that of plot for its own sake, imitated from Spain; that in which farce is the dominant element; lastly, that in which we have a foretaste of sentimental seriousness.

Several works, however, cannot be passed over in this rapid survey: *The Mulberry Garden* (1668) of the poet Charles Sedley,[1] which, with its amusing figures of young coxcombs, its witty repartees, continues the first efforts of Etherege, and seems to mark the transition between them and the earlier works of Wycherley; *Epsom Wells* (1672), *The Squire of Alsatia* (1688), and *Bury Fair* (1689) of Shadwell,[2] plays heavily written, clumsily constructed, but curious on account of the picture they give of realistic scenes—watering-places, the lower life of London, popular festivals; *The Rover, or The Banished Cavaliers*, a play in two parts (1677–80) by Mrs. Behn,[3] who with her varied production, her coloured descriptions, her lively dialogue, her adumbration of feminism, her relative decency of bearing, is an original figure in the literature of the time; and *The Country Wit* (1676), *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685), of John Crowne,[4] where the invention is rather droll, and the tone still very far from delicate, but where the political themes, the moralizing intentions, reveal in a way the secret working of minds.

Very diverse elements, for the most part borrowed, and associated indifferently in a loose action; feebly conceived characters, who almost always can be reduced to types so often repeated as to become conventional; verve, movement, sometimes wit, a comic power, exterior but undeniable; realism, scurrility, licentiousness; all of it significant, artistically poor, but rich in documentary value; such is, generally speaking, the comedy of the Restoration, as soon as the two or three main personalities are left out of account.

5. *The National Reaction in Drama: Dryden, Lee, and Otway.*—Between 1675 and 1680 a marked renascence of the

[1] See above, Chap. II, sect. 6.

[2] Thomas Shadwell, 1642–92. *Select Plays*, ed. by Saintsbury, Mermaid Series, 1903; *Complete Works*, ed. by M. Summers, 1927. It seems difficult to find in him a writer of the first order, or to pronounce him, despite certain analogies, a predec[illegible] For the opposite argument see A. Nicoll, *Restoration* [illegible] Borgman, *Thomas Shadwell*, 1929.

[3] 1640–89. See C[illegible], ed. by Summers, 6 vols.; study by V. Sackville-West, 1927.

[4] 1640–1703. *Dramatic Works*, ed. by Maidment and Logan, 1873–7; see A. H. White, *John Crowne, his Life and Dramatic Works*, 1922.

national spirit reveals itself in English literature. The inevitable reaction of the deeper instincts against the excess of [illegible] lastly, the fatigue which was at length provoked by the dominating influence of French art and fashions; all contribute to this secret movement towards the re-possession and re-assertion of the national self, which will not henceforth be checked, and of which the Revolution of 1688 will be the decisive success. This reaction is clearly visible in the drama, and more especially can be seen in the work of Dryden.

Some signs, at an early date, had pointed to it. Side by side with heroic tragedy, so steeped in a foreign spirit, could be found the survival of the Elizabethan tradition, very ill [illegible] the merit of which may have been exaggerated, but which wins our keen approval, if not our admiration (*All for Love*). 'In my style, I have professed to imitate the divine Shakespeare; which that I might perform more freely, I have disencumbered myself from rhyme' (Preface). The verse, indeed, if it has not yet all the desirable ease, gains from this liberation a suppleness of movement, in which English criticism seems rightly to see a necessary condition of tragic style.

At the same time, Dryden's critical essays reveal the change that has taken place in his thought. The preface he wrote

for his adaptation of *Troilus and Cressida* (*The Grounds of Criticism in Tragedy*, 1679), shows throughout a just, strong, and yet qualified appreciation of all the greatness of Shakespeare. Between the classical doctrine, derived from Aristotle, explained by Le Bossu and Rapin in France, and by Rymer in England, to which Dryden wishes to remain faithful, and, on the other hand, the technique of the Elizabethan Romanticists, he here establishes a deliberate reconciliation. The irregularities of Shakespeare are admitted, accounted for from the point of view of his time; and the superiority of his genius is established in relation whether to the moderns or to his contemporaries Fletcher and Jonson, or even to the ancients. And in the eyes of Dryden, it is Shakespeare, no doubt, who is thus reunited with the true classicism, of which he appeares the supreme representative; but, in fact, classicism thus broadened is no longer the ideal which English tragedy during the last twenty years had seemed to follow; for Dryden places the deeper vitality of the Shakespearian plays in the creation of characters, and this creation is the work of intuition, not of analysis. Such an inner difference betrays the essential divergence of the two arts, and is reflected in other planes—that of action as that of form. To exalt Shakespeare to the highest degree of dramatic genius, is to propose a model other than that of the unities as understood in France; and of these unities, Dryden now admits but a broad and free application. He claims that the mind of the English requires the mixture of comedy and tragedy (Preface to *Don Sebastian*).

Even to the close of his life his critical doctrine was subject to fluctuation; and his practice was to be in no wise different. The last twenty years of his career are very mixed: already *Troilus and Cressida* remodelled Shakespeare rather irreverently; an opera, *Albion and Albanius* (1685), and a dramatic opera, *King Arthur* (1691), appear to be little less than sacrifices to contemporary taste. A drama, *Cleomenes* (1692), is conceived and written, with a certain nobility and purity of line, in close imitation of French tragedy. But these various forms are animated by a new spirit of freedom and artistic virility, to which the use of blank verse, henceforward strictly adhered to (save in opera), only gives a tangible expression. This spirit is to be found concentrated in the tragic parts of *The Spanish Friar*; and, above all, in a fine drama, *Don Sebastian* (1690), where the action undoubtedly still recalls

tragi-comedy, but where serious scenes, of a sober pathos, alternate without clashing with episodes of frank and crude gaiety. This play is, perhaps, the model of what the [illegible] art of Dryden [illegible]
high [illegible]
thoug [illegible]

Other writers obey the same influences at the same time. Between 1675 and 1685 we witness a [illegible]
the English [illegible]
type, [illegible]
scious [illegible]
etc.) [illegible]
save [illegible]
horror [illegible], the connection is more brilliantly patent.

Nathaniel Lee[1] is a singular and pitiable figure. The stamp of an unbalanced nature is upon his talent and his work. His short existence was darkened by mental troubles, his end hastened by excesses. He seems to have led, like Wycherley in his youth, a life of feverish excitement and pleasure; and like him, to have reaped from it a sense of bitter disgust (Dedication to *The Rival Queens*). But this duality of soul is here much more pronounced: and [illegible] properly speaking [illegible]
[illegible]
the [illegible]

[illegible] may have found their subjects in ancient history (or in the contemporary French

[1] Born about 1653, a graduate of Cambridge, he essayed acting as a profession but without success; his first play was *Nero* (1675); he then [illegible] tragedies (*Sophonisba*, [illegible]

Venice Preserved, the brilliant and the durable success of which

and must be looked upon as such; a solitary work, unequalled in the half-century which preceded it, or the century which came after. Its importance in literature is none the less for

have experienced such a survival of the Romantic past.

The most curious feature of the work is the intimate and coherent fusion of this Romanticism with something at least of the classical spirit. Despite the frenzied outbursts of *Venice Preserved*, there is evidence of a certain disciplining of the intellect. The intense pathos of the drama is carried on,

itself to the jerks, the sudden breaks of a passionate, breathless dialogue. His verse, more unequal and rough than that of Lee, has solid merits. There is a sequence, as there is a depth, in the characters. The play is really built upon a psychological base: it is the tragedy of friendship, stronger and higher than love. The action, rapid and concentrated, leads on to an inevitable catastrophe, a bitter, sad emotion radiates from each stage in the unfolding of the fate at work, even if the painting of tenderness and of its sorrows appeals less to the heart than to the nerves

Despite weak points, lengthy passages, some rant, the play as a whole preserves a fine artistic bearing. The violent, cruel realism of the comic parts, where, under the name of Antonio, the Earl of Shaftesbury is put on the stage, does not destroy the sombre atmosphere of the drama, and the effect of harmony through contrast is faithful to the very essence of Shakespearian aesthetics. The most penetrating note of the work is a kind of bitter pessimism, whose personal, tormented accent

is explained by the life of Otway, by his unfortunate passion for Mrs. Barry, and his approaching death.

To be consulted: Beljame, *Public et hommes de lettres en Angleterre, etc.*, 1897; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. viii; Chaps. V, VI, VII; Canfield, *Corneille and Racine in England*, 1904; Charlanne, *Influence française en Angleterre au XVII^e siècle*, 1906; L. N. Chase, *The English Heroic Play*, 1903; Courthorpe, *History of English Poetry*, vol. iv, 1903; B. Dobrée, *Restoration Comedy, 1660–1720*, 1924; idem, *Restoration Tragedy*, 1929; Eccles, *Racine in England*, 1922; Fitzmaurice-Kelly, *Relations between Spanish and English Literature*, 1910; Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration . . . to 1830*, 10 vols., 1832; Hazlitt, *Lectures on the English Comic Writers*, 1819; Harvey-Jellie, *Les Sources du théâtre anglais de la Restauration*, 1906; K. M. Lynch, *The Social Mode of Restoration Comedy*, 1926; Macaulay, 'Essay on Leigh Hunt' (*The Dramatic Works of Wycherley, etc.*), 1841; Miles, *The Influence of Molière on Restoration Comedy*, 1910; Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration, etc.*, 1914; A. Nicoll, *History of Restoration Drama, 1660–1700*, 1923; Palmer, *The Comedy of Manners*, 1913; Pendlebury, *Dryden's Heroic Plays*, 1923; H. T. E. Perry, *The Comic Spirit in Restoration Drama*, 1925; *Restoration Plays, etc.*, introduced by Gosse (Everyman's Library), 1912; H. E. Rollins, 'A Contribution to the History of English Commonwealth Drama, (*Studies in Philology*, July 1921); Schelling, *English Drama*, 1914; A. H. Thorndike, *Tragedy*, 1928; idem, *English Comedy*, 1929; Ward, *History of English Dramatic Literature*, 1899.

CHAPTER V

RATIONALISM AND RESTORATION PROSE

1. *The Philosophy of Reason: Hobbes, Newton.*—The rational character of the Restoration is clearly seen in the domain of

repress the boldest ventures of opinion and of language, and, above all, the written and published formula of extreme con-

the seventeenth century, below the stream of Puritanism, and its course attains the second half without being broken. Scarcely has Cromwell consolidated his personal power, when it again comes to the surface. The Restoration allows it to spread out with relative freedom. The intellectual characteristics of this age are thus the issue, not only of a reaction, but of a continuous development, as well as of certain immediate causes.

Bacon had drawn up the programme of the general effort by which modern thought, rebelling against the yoke of scholasticism, was to explore and get acquainted with reality. His doctrine is a force at work everywhere; but he does not seem to have had any immediate successors. On the eve of the Restoration, those thinkers who are tempted by the need for lucidity and order turn readily to the philosophy of Descartes, which is then radiating throughout Europe. The University of Cambridge, the most active centre of English philosophy at this epoch, is at the same time a focus of rationalist ideas, and the seat of a renascence of Platonic idealism. With the first movement of ideas can be connected such thinkers as Whichcote; the doctrine of Descartes is in great favour at Christ's College: but Henry More and Cudworth adopt it as a point of departure for original speculations, which are to carry them to different, almost mystical views.

Thus Cartesianism, with its logical severity, has a strong effect upon minds, but stimulates rather than subjugates them. Just as in France, it provokes, in England, an instinctive resistance on the part of such temperaments as are startled by the boldness of its method and of its initial negations, and are not sufficiently reassured by the spiritualistic conclusions it has to offer. On the other hand, this very spiritualism is what alienates the greatest English philosopher of the seventeenth century, Thomas Hobbes,[1] a thinker of

[1] Born in 1588, died in 1678, Hobbes formed a link between the Renaissance and the Restoration; travelled on the Continent, sojourned in France from 1640 to 1651, where he made the acquaintance of Father Mersenne and sent to Descartes his objections to the *Méditations*. His doctrines attracted the attention of the Roman Catholic clergy and he returned to England, where he succeeded, not without difficulty, in being left alone. After 1660 he owed much to the favour of Charles II. His philosophical works were late productions: *Elements of Law, Natural and Politic* (circulated in manuscript, 1640); *De Cive* (1642; translated into English under the title of *Philosophical Rudiments concerning Government and Society*, 1651); *Leviathan*, 1651; *De Corpore*, 1655, etc. The last period of his life was spent in controversy and in literary works such as a translation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, 1676. *Works*,

exceptional quality, in whom a radical empiricism, pushed to its limit, produces a singular structure of fearless reason and cold practical realism.

The system of Hobbes, although fully worked out in all its parts before 1660, belongs none the less, by virtue of its tendencies, to the Restoration. It harmonizes with the scepticism impregnated by science which at that time forms the basis, acknowledged or secret, of many minds. It gives the serious support of a doctrine to the infidelity and free-thinking of the fashionable wits. In the eyes of the general public, it represents the most dangerous effort of reason against orthodoxy. One of the causes of the relative impunity with which it comes forward resides in the definitely monarchic character of its political conclusions. While it could well be a source of uneasiness to consciences, it served the interests of the sovereign, and consecrated the need for stability in a society that had felt the upheaval of civil struggles. It justified, from the philosophic point of view, the attempt made by the last representatives of the Stuart dynasty to escape from parliamentary control.

Just as with Descartes, it was Hobbes's desire to build up a connected explanation of this thought, and the larger works in which he interprets it follow a preconceived plan. One may see in his metaphysics and in his psychology a first application to the theory of the world and the soul, of the explanatory formulae proposed by modern physics. The system of Galileo established a mechanical order in the movements of the heavenly bodies. Hobbes reduces all the material universe to movement; and by a daring analogy, attaining at one stroke the boldest views entertained by scientific monism in the nineteenth century, he reduces to the same principle the whole moral universe of mind and society.

Our sensations and our ideas, he says are bound up with physical causes, and, indeed, are of one nature with theirs Corresponding to the action of the exterior world upon us, there is on our part a reaction of positive or negative appetite, and a general expression of these desires is the whole law of morality. But while moral law is that of an absolute individualism, life is only compatible with the reciprocal

ed. by Molesworth, 16 vols., 1839–45; *Leviathan*, ed by Walker, 1904. See the studies by G Lyon (*La Philosophie de Hobbes*), 1893, Sir L. Stephen, 1904; Taylor, 1909; R. Gadave, *Thomas Hobbes et ses théories du contrat social*, etc., 1907; G. Catlin, *Thomas Hobbes*, 1922.

mitation of egoisms. From the natural state of things, which ; that of the war of each against all, there necessarily springs a ocial pact; the individual places himself under the protection f a master, either a personal sovereign or a chosen body, whose power, if it is to be efficacious, must recognize no other ule than that of its own will. The only alternative to the bsolute authority of an individual or collective sovereign is narchy; spiritual power derives all its force from civil power; n the case of a conflict, it is the latter, and not the former, which carries the day. Theocracy, whether Catholic or Puri-an, is a monstrous anomaly. In the 'kingdom of darkness' —for it is thus that Hobbes symbolizes the errors of social rganization—the Church rises up as the rival of political upremacy, of this great collective being, a true 'Leviathan,' whose gigantic body embraces that of all citizens; and, abusing er spiritual prestige, crushes the growing minds of the young, n the universities, with a science that is wholly verbal. . . .

Such is this doctrine, so bold and so strangely prescient, which seems to anticipate the materialism of modern physics, he sensualist and associationist psychology, the ethics of utilitarianism, and the sociology of the Positivists. In one ound it reaches conclusions of so advanced a nature, that English thought will not follow it. The shock it gives to ninds will no doubt be reverberated for a long time; eighteenth-century deism will be much indebted to it. But the more noderate empiricism of Locke will be more directly efficacious. Hobbes, while he is a philosopher, is also a vigorous, clear-hinking writer, of a sobriety as compact as it is powerful, of a logical cogency always firm and always easy to grasp. By virtue of its precision, pruned of all useless ornament, and its estrained note of imaginative ardour, the style of his English works affords an outstanding example of the transition towards classical prose.

The intellectual influences, continental as well as English, which give rise to the doctrine of Hobbes, explain the awaken-ng and diffusion of the scientific spirit in England. From Bacon's time, induction had become a recognized method; the observation of nature was more and more tending to replace scholastic discussions: Harvey had discovered the circulation of the blood. Even in the days of Puritanism, more than one investigator was carrying out secret experiments which had as much to do with alchemy or magic as with chemistry, and which ran the risk of being sternly punished by the secular

arm. The F
During his s
taste for an
creation, and his courtiers imitate him. In this atmosphere, the granting of a charter to the Royal Society for the advancement of science (1662) is quite a natural act.[1] Its object is to bring into touch with one another those minds that are

Cowley, Denys himself, take an interest in its work. Among

the time; and the day is no longer distant when it will be considered abnormal for a man of culture to overlook its claims No doubt, there is still a little naïveté in the attraction which drives certain members of the Royal Society to

literature. Latin is the medium which he employs for the work wherein is expounded the theory of universal gravitation. But this discovery and that of the infinitesimal calculus, through the preparatory work leading up to them, through all the movement of thought and research which precedes them, and in addition, through all the controversies which they call forth, fill the last years of the Restoration with a stir of scientific activity. The contemporaries feel that something great is in the making, that the efforts of 'mechanical philosophy' are unravelling the secrets of the universe. Reason now definitely establishes its claims to direct thought as well as life. Henceforward, this thesis is no longer disputed; the eighteenth century and the age of classicism find in it one of their essential certitudes.

2. *Religious Rationalism: Barrow, South, Tillotson, etc.*—

[1] Its origin dates back to 1645; the register of its meetings begins in 1660.
[2] Sir Isaac Newton, born in 1642, died in 1727. His great work, *Philosophiae Naturalis Principia Mathematica*, was published in 1687.

Religious thought, in its turn, becomes impregnated with the rationalism of philosophy and science. Within the Anglican Church, the 'latitudinarian' tendency is already in evidence during the troubled period that precedes the Restoration; in Cambridge it numbers several illustrious representatives, such as Whichcote. In its beginnings, it is connected by intellectual affinities with the Platonism of More and Cudworth; but soon the rationalistic current and the mystic current diverge; the latter, menaced by the withering atmosphere of a hostile age, seeks a course apart, and must be considered as one of the various intellectual movements in deep disagreement with the spirit of the times.

The latitudinarians tend to broaden Christian doctrine; they lay stress upon common beliefs, upon what unites sects, not what divides them. Their notion of faith and its proofs thus develops towards a pure matter of reason; they react against the enthusiastic zeal of the Puritans, against the extreme forms of the personal interpretation of Scripture. They provide the connecting link between science and religion; Whichcote's desire is to apply the inductive method of Bacon to apologetics; Joseph Glanvill,[1] chaplain to Charles II, is a member of the Royal Society. Despite the attacks directed against it, the latitudinarian spirit spreads; it is the natural corollary of the tolerance towards which secular society is tending, and which is established by the Revolution of 1688; lastly, it inspires most of the Restoration theologians and preachers.

Theirs is a theology of reason. The most vigorous and, no doubt, the most typical of these Christian thinkers, Isaac Barrow,[2] is the predecessor of Newton in a chair of mathematics at Cambridge; he disserts upon the mysteries of faith with all the rigour of a scientist. A demonstration, with him, never loses sight of the ideal of a series of terms logically connected. His *Exposition of the Lord's Prayer* explains the duties of love and charity as obligations of clear-sighted wisdom; the *Exposition of the Decalogue* transposes all the divine commandments into appeals to good sense, to which an upright mind cannot turn a deaf ear. The treatise *On the*

[1] The *Scepsis Scientifica* (1665) and the *Plus Ultra, or The Progress and Advancement of Knowledge* (1668), by this writer, are of special interest and significance. See F. Greenslet, *Joseph Glanvill, A Study in English Thought and Letters of the Seventeenth Century*, 1900.

[2] 1630–77; sojourned in Paris, and travelled in the East; was professor of Greek, then of mathematics, and master of Trinity College, Cambridge; a member of the Royal Society. His theological works comprise nine volumes (ed. by Napier, Cambridge, 1859).

But theology most often is merged in ethics. The latter are frankly utilitarian. Barrow insists in the most simple and direct way upon the advantageous consequences of virtue; to render unto God and unto men what is due to them is to acquire, without the fear of any possible disappointment, a claim to a substantial reward, wherein the good things of this

association connects success, fortune, honours, a long life,
ain rules which are
on establishes. An
whatever happens,
the path of salvation.

There is nothing less mystical than this notion of ethics; nothing which better corresponds, in return, with the deepest

form of wisdom. South[1] studies the conditions of durable pleasure, and finds them in a judicious moderation. Tillotson[2] renders thanks to God in that He has concealed from the

[1] Robert South, 1634–1716; lived at Oxford, where he was the recipient of academic honours and ecclesiastical offices. His *Sermons* were published in 4 vols, 1843

With them pulpit eloquence acquired a brilliance which, in the last years of the seventeenth century, was thought dazzling, but which has since singularly paled. Their art shows negative qualities; a faculty of clear reasoning, of sensible argumentation; a well-bred moderation; something easy and intelligible, persuasive even, provided the mind is not overruled by any hot conviction. These lucid and candid expositions, devoid of any sectarian narrowness and free from any passion of enthusiasm, appeal to the understanding of a reasonable age, and strengthen it in the decisions of its practical will. They have in them a sound rhetoric, and at times, a logical cogency; but nothing that resembles the noblest flights of oratorical inspiration.

This medium eloquence, which often appears cold to us, is not, however, to be despised. Sometimes one can feel it in the pent-up warmth of an inner fire, the ardour of a moral radiance. No matter how intellectual Barrow may be, there is in his work an animation, the source of which lies in a hidden sensibility. Tillotson, who was looked upon as the great Christian orator of the time, is at most a good writer of sermons; but his contemporary, South, is a genuine writer, whose vigour, breadth, and imaginative language preserve a reflected glow from the poetry of the Renascence.

Generally speaking, the style of these theologians and preachers finds its chief merit in the quiet, facile light that plays upon it. Despite lingering traces of preciosity or pompousness, it has a markedly modern character. Supple and orderly, composed of well-balanced elements, and either of short sentences or of adjusted and constructed periods, it is one of the major signs, as it is an instrument, of the progress of classical prose. Dryden liked to acknowledge his debt to Tillotson; and it can be admitted that he did owe him something; though this homage probably is no less generously exaggerated than that which he paid to Waller, when he extolled the fecundity of the poetic example the latter had set him.

3. *History: Clarendon, Burnet. Memoirs: Evelyn, Pepys, etc.*—The Restoration is an age of history, as of satire and comedy. The critical activities of thought, the application of an awakened reflection to events and to men, a more conscious interest taken by life in itself, go to explain the simultaneous development of these kinds which are linked up by an obvious affinity. Society was emerging from a period of

dramatic restlessness; after having lived [illegible]
great [illegible]

[illegible] set to work to note the visible stages of the movement, and the facts of every day. Thus, the general progress of thought and [illegible] men's [illegible] the cu[illegible] to pla[illegible] history of the present. Historians, writers of diaries and memoirs, are now numerous.[1]

Clarendon, the statesman, High Chancellor under King Charles II, infuses into his account of the Civil War, of which he was a witness, the spirit of the Restoration in politics and religion.[2] A party man, of penetrating discernment and wide culture, he looks upon history as a kind of arresting statement, explicative and persuasive, in which the regard for truth is subordinated to the interest of art and to the service of a cause. His great work, begun in 1646, is already modern by the breadth of the perspective, the careful planning of the whole, the handling of details, arranged in narratives that are long and full, and yet never wander. We have not here the deep probing after causes, the philosophy of a revolution; the information, wholly personal, is on a broad scale, but fallible, as the author's memory must be; conscientiousness, and the scrupulous attention to truth, are here neither a rule nor a torment; the narrator has not the sense of what objective research could be; he submits, in all good faith, to the requirements of the cause he is pleading. But it is pleaded with fullness, with a partiality that most often remains sober and becoming, and with a certain epic nobility of thought that rises

[1] To this date also and after an obscure evolution of half a century can be traced the rise of the modern press. The need felt by the educated [illegible] be put into touch with the [illegible]

[2] [illegible] of Clarendon, born in 1608, was one of the advisers of Charles I in his struggle with Parliament; accompanied the Prince of Wales abroad and returned with Charles II; High Chancellor until 1667, then an exile, he died in France in 1674. His *History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England, etc.*, was not published until the accession of Queen Anne, 1702–4; edited by W. D. Macray, 6 vols., Oxford, 1888. Into this work he had written much of his own biography, which at first he had meant as a separate work. *Miscellaneous Works*, 1851.

above all petty rancour and paltry passions. The interest of the pictures and of the narrations is only surpassed by that of the portraits, broadly planned and painted at full length, with method and care; of a fairly penetrating touch, that often attains to the soul, but where we feel that sympathy alone is the measure of justice, and that wherever it is lacking there is a distinct falling-off. The portrait or 'character' was then in fashion; Clarendon had been able, during his stay in France, to see finished models of it; his own are drawn with obvious literary scruple, and rare felicity.

While by his analysis and lucidity he can be ranked as a modern, his style shows him to be still a transitional writer. Flowing along in an even, easy movement, his prose tends visibly towards the disintegration of periods, but remains periodic; this basic hesitation between an old and a new syntax makes it appear somewhat disjointed; moreover, the logical relations of the successive elements are awkwardly shown. Despite this embarrassment, the whole reads pleasantly, thanks to its variety, animation, and gift for picturesque precision.

A generation separates Clarendon from his inevitable rival, Gilbert Burnet.[1] The latter, by his mental outlook, still belongs to the Restoration; but it is with the classical age that this period is connected through his work. His first writings are anterior to the Revolution of 1688; he completes, shortly after 1700, the part of his great work which deals with the reigns of Charles II and James II, and carries his narrative farther up to the Treaty of Utrecht, shaping its course on that of events themselves. The progress of criticism with him is evidenced in a more modern conception of history.

Burnet remains, above all, a moralist; his object is to instruct and edify his reader; to make known, as he says, 'men and councils,' leaving the gazettes to deal with the facts

[1] 1643–1715; a Scotsman, he upheld the cause of the Episcopalians; after 1674, became a preacher in London, was very popular, and gained the favour of the king, but lost this when he adopted an independent attitude towards the Duke of York and the attempts at a Roman Catholic restoration. He advocated tolerance, sided with the Whig party, and was soon obliged to flee the kingdom; joined the court of William of Orange in 1687, returned to England at the Revolution of 1688, and became Bishop of Salisbury. His important work is *The History of My Own Time*, a posthumous publication, 1724–35, which aroused a series of spirited discussions in political circles and was severely attacked by Swift and the Tory party; ed. by Airy, 1897, etc. In addition to numerous treatises, sermons, biographies, etc., mention should be made of the *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, 1679–81; ed. by Pocock, 1875. See the biography by Clarke and Foxcroft, 1907.

themselves. But if he aims at showing the inner forces at work, and seeks
to be impartial,
without art or ai
family ties or fri
kept strictly to t
than Clarendon, Burnet did not escape the reproaches of his political adversaries. Less of an artist than his predecessor, he is not appreciabl
of his portraits, whic
criminating fund of
in one part analytic
organic and heavy, and still reminds us of that of Clarendon, without, however, possessing the other's force of imaginative suggestion. It bears the visible stamp of a more positive age, and of a drier thought.

Among the numerous memoirs of the Restoration, two bio-

widow,[1] and the *Life of William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle*, by his wife,[2] the duchess, were written at the same time: the first between 1664 and 1671; the second during the years preceding 1667. They paint two interesting figures for the historian, and set up in a natural opposition the traits of the Puritan, of ordinary birth, who builds up a life of political

Hutchinson and Lady Newcastle add to the piety of their conjugal affection a claim to culture and intellectuality which, for the time, remains exceptional, being outside the regular

scope of feminine life; and this original ambition develops, with the one, into a feeling of self which is repressed by austere principles, but which is not altogether free from pride and hardness; with the other, into a somewhat extravagant preciosity, through which there comes out the charm of a rich and curious spontaneity. Neither the one nor the other is a writer of great talent; but Mrs. Hutchinson uses a careful, energetic style, a trifle oratorical, the syntax of which, however, is often involved; while the Duchess of Newcastle owes the attraction of her pages to an ease which is wholly impulsive, and more in keeping with the irregular flow of a prose influenced but slightly by the spirit of classicism.

The *Mémoires du Comte de Grammont*, by Hamilton,[1] belong to French literature. The *Memoirs* of Sir John Reresby, the *Diary* of Lady Warwick, the *Memoirs* of Lady Fanshawe,[2] all show the fertility of this kind, to which any artistic intention is often quite foreign. The desire to tell the story of one's life, or to fix in writing the varied, ever-changing traits of an age when the course of things is speedy and rich in incidents, when the individual throws off the shackles of former constraints, lies at the root of this fecundity, which, from now onwards, will be a permanent characteristic of literary production. But two diarists, Evelyn[3] and

[1] Anthony Hamilton, of Scottish parentage, spent the greater part of his youth in France, and at the court of Charles II found himself again in an atmosphere saturated with French influences. Whatever the part which one can attribute to the Comte de Grammont himself in the story of his adventures, this extremely witty work is one of the most remarkable examples of the perfect assimilation of a foreign language with all its genius, all its finer shades of meaning. Written about 1701, it was published at Cologne in 1713. The English translation appeared in 1714; ed. by Goodwin, 1903. See the study by Ruth Clark, 1921.

[2] Reresby died in 1689; his *Memoirs* were published in 1734; ed. by Ivatt, 1904. Lady Mary Boyle, the sister of Robert Boyle and of the Earl of Orrery, married Charles Rich, Earl of Warwick, in 1659; her *Diary*, which covers the period 1666–72, was published in 1848. Anne Harrison married in 1644 Sir Richard Fanshawe, who was an active agent of the royal cause and ambassador in Portugal and Spain. He died in 1666; the *Memoirs* of Lady Fanshawe, of great historical interest, appeared in 1829; new ed., 1907.

[3] John Evelyn, born in 1620, came of a wealthy family, travelled on the Continent, served the cause of the king, and after the Restoration filled several public offices, becoming an active member of the Royal Society. At Sayes Court with its famous gardens he led the life of a country gentleman of letters, the liberal protector of art and science. His *Diary*, which only sums up his early memories, assumes the character of a detailed account of events from 1641 onwards, and is continued, on a varying scale, until the year of his death (1706); it was published in 1818. Ed. by A. Dobson, 3 vols., 1906. Evelyn himself published numerous works, e.g. *Sylva*, 1664. *Miscellaneous Writings*, 1825. See *The Early Life and Education of John Evelyn*, ed. by Maynard Smith, 1920.

Pepys,[1] have merited a place apart through the exceptional value of the substance of their works, and also through their personalities.

Evelyn's interest ...

... kings of the Stuart dynasty and William III owes much to his pages. His personal choice leads him to observe natural phenomena ...

... from all the rush of court and town life alike, he reflects the fever of pleasure without actually taking part in it; and his moral perception is not obtuse; he it is who reveals to us, in a Mrs. Godolphin, one of the most upright and most touching characters of an age when noble figures are rare. For Evelyn ...

... period and the moral ...

of the class ...

[1] Samuel Pe...
early hardship...
nected with th...
the Royal Soci...
trials, the resul...
of a mere offic...
ciphered and ...
personality. ...
Wheatley, 8 v...
Samuel Pepys, e...
of Men and Boo...
1922; G. Bradfo...

has a relative elegance, and, as it were, a natural correctness; all that is still inorganic in contemporary syntax is here most often redeemed by the lucidity of the thought.

Pepys is a writer of unique interest. In no literature can one find so absolutely sincere a confession; for it was not written with a view to being published, nor even deciphered, and its intention was only to recall the minutest detail of daily life to a personality naïvely fond of preserving and living through it again. It is free from all conscious warping; it does not even offer the unconscious alterations through which the pride of the Romanticist invents or exaggerates the weaknesses and perversities of his own self. Between the mind of Pepys and the hand that pens his thoughts there interposes no moral shame, no self-respect, no desire for self-idealization; he brings a splendid and perfect objectivity to this record of his life. Thus, we are given the true and complete portrait of a soul; or rather, of what an average soul, that is little anxious to live at a high pitch of concentration, can understand of itself. And as its whole attention is focused on the outside world, on the field of its daily activity, and the ever-changing setting in which that activity lies, we find in the delectable wealth of these memoirs ten years of the concrete history of England, as seen from a central point by a diligent, assimilating observer, who is enough mixed up with decisive events to have first-hand experience of them, and who, at the same time, keeps sufficiently clear to give us the opinion of the crowd.

The grave, virtuous figure of Mr. Pepys, aureoled in the reflected glow of public dignity and pomp, vanishes at the contact of his own book. Its place is taken by a man who is strangely living and real, because he participates in all the little, illogical, incongruous, unavowed weaknesses of that psychological reality which ethics, decency, and social sentiment mitigate or cover up on every occasion. No realistic novel will ever, in point of accurate truth, surpass the standard of this involuntary art, even though the active analysis of the novelist will often display greater penetration and a farther reach. The figure which thus reveals itself, under the crudest light, is that of a man who, mediocre as he is in some of his features, is quite estimable in others, and who bears well this terribly searching scrutiny. Pepys is an encouraging example of humanity as seen without disguise; his instinctive egoism has nothing harsh about it; he is capable of disinterested

feelings; his public zeal goes farther than the mere care of his own career, and at times broadens out into a really national

tittle-tattle of the day, the court and the town, the information he supplies is that of a man whose sincere desire has been to understand and to feel.

His record, divided up into short notes jotted down from day to day, and as desultory as life itself, wields upon our imaginations the spell of an ever-changing, picturesque spectacle, the dramatic quality of which is increased by its documentary value. Here an epoch revives, and the world of

of London, spread themselves out in all their magnitude. In the pages of Pepys there is a style since there is a man, and one who knows how to observe, and note typical details, fix them in words, exact, vivid, expressive; there is a writer, although there is not the slightest trace of art. His *Diary*

His language, which is entirely spontaneous, has the slips, the abbreviations, the ready-made and passively repeated forms, of the most familiar conversation with one's self. As slightly constructed as possible, it does not react in any way against the dissolution of the former periodic syntax; and the continual jerks of these notes which run on, then stop to start again, ceaselessly bounding off with a broken, quick movement, strike one as revealing the loosest mental and verbal organization. And yet there is a certain order in this irregular sequence, the direct order of sensation and the association of ideas; and the story as a whole is clear, almost always limpid and easy to follow, no less than it is lively and

has a relative elegance, and, as it were, a natural correctness; all that is still inorganic in contemporary syntax is here most often redeemed by the lucidity of the thought.

Pepys is a writer of unique interest. In no literature can one find so absolutely sincere a confession; for it was not written with a view to being published, nor even deciphered, and its intention was only to recall the minutest detail of daily life to a personality naïvely fond of preserving and living through it again. It is free from all conscious warping; it does not even offer the unconscious alterations through which the pride of the Romanticist invents or exaggerates the weaknesses and perversities of his own self. Between the mind of Pepys and the hand that pens his thoughts there interposes no moral shame, no self-respect, no desire for self-idealization; he brings a splendid and perfect objectivity to this record of his life. Thus, we are given the true and complete portrait of a soul; or rather, of what an average soul, that is little anxious to live at a high pitch of concentration, can understand of itself. And as its whole attention is focused on the outside world, on the field of its daily activity, and the ever-changing setting in which that activity lies, we find in the delectable wealth of these memoirs ten years of the concrete history of England, as seen from a central point by a diligent, assimilating observer, who is enough mixed up with decisive events to have first-hand experience of them, and who, at the same time, keeps sufficiently clear to give us the opinion of the crowd.

The grave, virtuous figure of Mr. Pepys, aureoled in the reflected glow of public dignity and pomp, vanishes at the contact of his own book. Its place is taken by a man who is strangely living and real, because he participates in all the little, illogical, incongruous, unavowed weaknesses of that psychological reality which ethics, decency, and social sentiment mitigate or cover up on every occasion. No realistic novel will ever, in point of accurate truth, surpass the standard of this involuntary art, even though the active analysis of the novelist will often display greater penetration and a farther reach. The figure which thus reveals itself, under the crudest light, is that of a man who, mediocre as he is in some of his features, is quite estimable in others, and who bears well this terribly searching scrutiny. Pepys is an encouraging example of humanity as seen without disguise; his instinctive egoism has nothing harsh about it; he is capable of disinterested

feelings; his public zeal goes farther than the ...
own career, and at tin...
concern. Moreover, th...

... the insor-
whose sincere desire has

... divided up into short notes jotted down from day to day, and as desultory as life itself, wields upon our imaginations the spell of an ever-changing, picturesque spectacle, the dramatic quality of which is increased by its ...

... and the gossip acquires a touch of dignity when historic scenes, such as the coronation of Charles II, the ravages of the plague, the Fire of London, spread themselves out in all their magnitude. In the pages of Pepys there is a style since there is a man, and one who knows how to observe, and note typical details, fix them in words, exact, vivid, expressive; there is a writer, although there is not the slightest trace of art. His Diary ...

... representative of an age in which the desire for truth is still part and parcel of the ...

H... slips,
the... cated
form... As
sligh... constructed as possible, it does not react in any way against the dissolution of the former periodic syntax; and the continual jerks of these notes which run on, then stop to start again, ceaselessly bounding off with a broken, quick movement, strike one as revealing the loosest mental and verbal organization. And yet there is a certain order in this irregular sequence, the direct order of sensation and the association of ideas; and the story as a whole is clear, al... always limpid and easy to follow, no less than it is lively

suffers an eclipse; but enlightened, judicious, we
authors discourse from now onwards on what was
the substance of instinctive creations, or of treatises
with learning.

The essay is the branch of literature best adapted
'he be
classi
f an
kee

close to the *form given it by Montaigne, whose influence*
for a moment had waned, is now reviving.[1] The
analyses of Bacon, invested with a choice, dense, ima
style, have less of a following than the more simply
words of the author of the *Essais.* Cowley,[2] a write
preceding generation, survives the Restoration by
years; at his death, he leaves eleven short familiar t
moral subjects, interspersed with verse, strewn with an
and of a remarkably easy movement, where the ma
Montaigne is allied with a personal touch. Here, t
of the new literature is incontestably dominant; er

written his critical prefaces and essays

The essays of Temple are works of estimable merit
out the erudition of the scholar, he writes history fr

point of view of a layman; his *Essay on Ancient and Modern Learning* cannot be defended; but he was able to see the realities of contemporary life, and his political judgments have a certain vigour. In the domain of things moral, he brings the gift of a clear-sighted and calm reflectiveness, without illusion or bitterness; less good-natured than Montaigne, and less forceful than Swift, he sometimes recalls the one, sometimes the other. His maxims have often a happy finesse. Classical in his tastes, and a supporter of the ancients against the moderns, he speaks very freely on the question of rules, viewing them in the light of quite negative assurances against the worst errors of art. His thought is none the less of the most purely rational quality, with that practical bent, that attention to health, comfort, and the happiness that can accrue from the little pleasures of life, which are characteristically English, and in which the epicurean wisdom of Montaigne is given a more utilitarian cast.[1]

But these moderate merits are brought into stronger relief by the character of easy balance and supple spontaneity in which the man and the writer equally share. With Temple, the rationalism of the Restoration appears, as it were, really incorporated with the moral person; it is one with the instinct itself of a nature that finds therein, and without effort, the assured working of sensibility as of intelligence. Practised in this easy way, the new spirit in literature is no longer a fashion, nor an aggressive attitude which still savours of a reaction; it has become a normal temperament. In a sense Temple is the first of the English classicists; and his clear-cut style, unencumbered, simple, smooth but still compact, symmetrical and yet free from monotony, has almost always the rhythm and finish of the best modern prose.

5. *Restoration Prose.*—An epoch of honourable fecundity, but one in which the summits of art are seldom reached, the Restoration can claim that it prepared the instruments which literature will employ from now onwards. The 'heroic' or rhymed couplet, with its cadence, its pauses, the epigrammatic or didactic tone which is proper to it, and the range of its possible effects—a range more extensive, in fact, than that which Pope will use—has been carried by Dryden, after Waller and Denham, right to the state of final elaboration where one can say that a new mould of poetry has been evolved. Admirably adapted to verse of a reasoning, cold nature, this mould

[1] Essays on *Gout, Health, Gardening*, etc.

is a consequence, in a much broader sense than it w
cause; the inspiration which has created it will make it
fortune, until the day when a new inspiration will de
have it recast.

The creation of a modern style is a less brilliant rea
perhaps, but will prove to be more durable. Whi
can be animated by the highest poetic sentiment, a
Romanticism will revivify English prose, there are s
calm and relatively simple effects which the liter
average ambition can never renounce, because it is
that it has most often to move; for these, it is indis
to command a clear, easy diction, one that adapts its
out effort to the idea, and that pleases without strai
much after beauty. To forge such a tool will not on
to realize a progress. As an instrument of art, the pro
last Elizabethans, of a Jeremy Taylor, for example,
sources which that of an age of reason will no longer
But it is in the plane of intelligence and common se
the great mass of ordinary writings naturally find the
and the possibility given to these writings of pro
moderate pleasure, without undue strain, is a pe
conquest, of which the English language has not yet
heritage. Time can hardly be said to have left its ma
the best essays of the Restoration; they read to-d
they had been written yesterday. The books of the p
generation, on the other hand, are already clouded o
mist of archaism.

Among the creators of modern prose, as of classic
Dryden must be placed in the front rank; and, indeed,
deep requirements of thought produce at the same ti
two literary forms. It is the spirit of analysis which
source of the one and of the other; or more exactly
general demand for easy intelligibility, of which anal
once an immediate consequence and a privileged ins
In order that there should be clearness, each element
the matter offered for each successive act of mental pe
must be short, and easily encompassed by the mind; so
the sake of economy of effort the long period, like t
poetic paragraph, is condemned. The brief sente

point of view of a layman; his *Essay on Ancien*
Learning cannot be defended; but he was ab
realities of contemporary life, and his politic
have a certain vigour. In the domain of thi
brings the gift of a clear-sighted and calm
without illusion or bitterness; less good-nature
taigne, and less forceful than Swift, he sometin
one, sometimes the other. His maxims have c
finesse. Classical in his tastes, and a supporter c
against the moderns, he speaks very freely on tl
rules, viewing them in the light of quite negati
against the worst errors of art. His thought is
of the most purely rational quality, with that p
that attention to health, comfort, and the happi
accrue from the little pleasures of life, which are
cally English, and in which the epicurean wisdom
is given a more utilitarian cast.[1]

But these moderate merits are brought into s
by the character of easy balance and supple s
which the man and the writer equally share.
the rationalism of the Restoration appears, as i
incorporated with the moral person; it is one wit
itself of a nature that finds therein, and witho
assured working of sensibility as of intelligenc
in this easy way, the new spirit in literature i
fashion, nor an aggressive attitude which still
reaction; it has become a normal temperament
Temple is the first of the English classicists;
cut style, unencumbered, simple, smooth but s
symmetrical and yet free from monotony, has a
the rhythm and finish of the best modern prose.

5. *Restoration Prose.*—An epoch of honourat
but one in which the summits of art are seldom
Restoration can claim that it prepared the instr
literature will employ from now onwards. Th
rhymed couplet, with its cadence, its pauses, the
or didactic tone which is proper to it, and the
possible effects—a range more extensive, in fa
which Pope will use—has been carried by Dryden
and Denham, right to the state of final elaborati

is a conseque

...tion of a modern style is a less brilliant realization, perhaps, but will prove to be more durable. While prose can be animated by the highest poetic sentiment, and while Romanticism will revivify English prose, there are scales of calm and relatively simple effects which the literature of average ambition can never renounce, because it is in them that it has most often to move; for the

r ... such a tool will not only mean to realize a progress. As an instrument of art, the prose of the last Elizabethans, of a Jeremy Taylor, for example, had resources which that of an age of reason will no longer possess. But it is in the plane of intelligence and common sense that the great mass of ordinary writings naturally find their place; and the possibility given to these writings of procuring a moderate pleasure, without undue strain, is a permanent conquest, of which the English language has not yet lost the heritage. Time can hardly be said to have left its mark upon the best essays of the Restoration; they read to-day as if they had been written yesterday. The books of the preceding generation, on the other hand, are already clouded over by a mist of archaism.

Among the creators of modern prose

d

t

sc

ge ... intelligibility of which ...

once an immediate

In order that there

the matter offered f

must be short, and

the sake of econom

poetic paragraph, is

the rhymed couplet,

Within the sentence

an order that is gras ... and the relationship of words, as of ideas, must be strongly marked by a firm

construction, for elegance and even beauty proceed, above all, from the transparency of the verbal arrangement, and from its perfect coincidence with the pattern of the thought. In poetry, where greater condensation is necessary, where expression has to be chosen and striking, this balance tends to organize itself around fixed relations of weight and mass, of which antithesis is the model. Prose remains more supple, and preserves a relative liberty of movement within the limits of a definite and settled form. Finally, the sentences, like the couplets, link up the one with the other into developments, according to natural and logical progressions, created by the action of a mind that is master of itself, and that passes from one object to another with the full consciousness of whence it comes and whither it is going.

Still animated by an imaginative and romantic ardour, the poetry of Dryden does not realize this ideal in its purity, or rather, it introduces therein artistic suggestions which are foreign, strictly speaking, to the standard it has set up. His prose is much closer to the perfect and stripped simplicity in which the literature of didactic exposition is henceforth to find its uniform type. The essays and prefaces of Dryden are often written with an absolute propriety of terms, joined to a sovereign ease, and move, in their smaller constituent parts, with an infallible sureness. It is in the building up of the whole work that this art is still at fault; it is not yet free from digressions and incertitudes; it has not lost all its fanciful spontaneousness. But it is, none the less, an art that is almost complete, and the example of a literary tradition that is being created at this time never to be broken. The same characteristics appear in the best of contemporary writers; and Sir William Temple is not inferior to Dryden.

On the one, as on the other, French prose has exercised an undeniable influence. The many translations of French works, the care with which Dryden and Temple have read French critics, their knowledge of the French language, enable one to discern the occasions and channels through which this influence did exert itself. But it seems possible to affirm that it was not the sufficient and decisive cause of a progress which the very quality of an age of reason irresistibly demanded. A time when science passes into the foreground when religion grows entirely rational, when the easily intelligible intercourse of minds in social life becomes the aim an law of literature, could not but tend to be an epoch of faci

nd regulated verbal communication; it was to aim at fashioning a prose both balanced and clear. The Restoration has not been exclusively prosaic; it has its brilliance, a kind of radiating glow, in which there still plays a last glimmer of the Renascence; but, if one considers the future, it is in the domain of prose that this period has realized its most lasting creation.

he English Essay, etc., 1915.

1. *The Elements of Psychological Dissidence: Idealism*
literary tone of the Restoration is of a uniformity rare
modern history of England. Paramount social force
coincidence of the inner rhythm and of circumstanc
strained the literature of this epoch to the relative sover
of a unique characteristic. Such simplicity, which in
would not be a sign of wealth, is here anything but ab
The collective life of a national spirit is never subjecte
perfect convergence. Already, in order to fit in this
to a logical frame, one must exclude the last works of M
which stand out like a glorious contradiction in th
centre of a hostile age.

This real complexity of temperament is not only to be
in the great belated Puritans. As soon as the facts are
examined, almost all the writers and their works reve
the side of their dominant tendencies, other tendencie
secondary nature; divergences of thought, of sensibilit
of taste, dissonant qualities as it were, which refuse
harmonized with the moral tone of the period.

These elements of irreducible variety are, now, feeb
permanent features; now, momentary revivings, sudde
dental reappearances, and in this case their character ha
a brilliant intensity. The preceding chapters have sh
fairly considerable number of moral or artistic moods t
with the general tonality of the epoch. Lyrical poet
the drama, in particular, offer a rather strong propor

These reserves do not impair the definition of the
It is not by virtue of what it retains of lyrical inspiratio
deep and moving appeal, that the figure of the Restora
recognizable among the ages.

As there are exceptional moods scattered througho
whole range of literature, so there are writers who in
selves are exceptions. Among the contemporaries of I
are to be found several authors who cannot be classed c
logically among the survivors of the preceding age, a
through their moral nature live wholly in harmony v

They raise to the status of art the natural expression of a fund of sentiment that dimly subsists in many souls, especially among the common people. Puritanism does not disappear with the advent of the Restoration. Relegated to the background, jeered at, and in its turn persecuted, the austerely mystic and personal religion seeks refuge in obscurity and silence. The social atmosphere of the time is hostile to it; it has hard[illegible]

of the day, [illegible]

lead, now [illegible]

when they attain intensity of character and beauty, seek to [illegible] ous treatises, [illegible] alone would [illegible] late-comers? [illegible] ursors. They [illegible] d the future. They reveal the persistence of a psychological temperament, the gradual awakening of which, during the following century, will open the way to a renovation in literature.

It is in the work of these three writers that one must perceive and study this temperament, at an epoch when a reaction towards intellectuality is sweeping irresistibly over the more cultured part of the nation. The more distinguished symptoms, so to say, that one can discover among churchmen and university people, are at once less pronounced and less representative. The 'Platonist' of Cambridge maintain a brilliant focus, but one that is decidedly local, of idealistic thought, the radiation of which scarcely penetrates beyond the circles of practised thinkers. Henry More,[1] and Cudworth,[2] at first Cartesians (see Chapter V), react against the philosophy of reason, whose trend towards scepticism is making them more and more apprehensive. Not only do

[1] Henry More, 1614–87, published in 1647 a philosophical poem, *The Song of*

they affirm the immortality of the soul, but they nourish rich and poetic feeling of its activity and destiny that lin them up with Plotinus. Cudworth is moreover a theorist spiritualism; More is a fervent idealist, almost a visionar But these thinkers have only been given their true place the eyes of a distant posterity; and their influence has nev been wide. On the contrary, the popular and at first hidd influence of Bunyan from an early hour reaches a widesprea class of readers; in the eighteenth century it emerges, to ra among the most fruitful spiritual forces of English literatu

2. *Bunyan.*—Bunyan[1] is only some few years younger th Marvell. If his work has to be connected with the Restoratio which officially ignores it, it is because it belongs almo entirely to this period. Besides, it bears the marks of pe secution; it is animated by a violent ardour which impriso ment, inward meditation, despair of the present, all drive the future, to dreams and symbols, to the compensato revenge of impassioned fancy.

No other writer has been shaped under such humble circu stances as Bunyan. He knew nothing of university cultur one can say that his mind was moulded by a single book, t Bible. The power of his imagination was nurtured by t Scriptures, which he realized and lived through by the i tensity of his fervour. The moving force of his spiritu dramas springs directly from a conscience in which the desti of the soul was continually working itself out. Bunyan on listened to his secret voices, and only related his own stor Proceeding thus from the most common and most accessib

[1] John Bunyan, born in 1628, in Bedfordshire, was the son of an artis received a very scant education, served in the Republican army; after cert moral crises in which he was tormented by the anguish of sin, he found co parative solace in the faith of a Baptist sect where he exercised the functio of preacher and battled against the Quakers. On the Restoration he w imprisoned and, refusing to submit, remained a prisoner for twelve yea Liberated in 1672, he became pastor of his little church, then after three yea was again thrown into prison for six months, and while thus in captivity wr the first part of *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1676). His last years were those of active and ardent apostle and writer. He died on the eve of the Revoluti (Aug. 1688). The first work in which is revealed the quality of his imaginati is *Grace Abounding*, 1666. *The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that wh is to come*, published in two parts (1678 and 1684); *The Life and Death of M Badman*, 1680; *The Holy War*, 1682, represent the heights of his litera endeavours, which were manifold. Ed. by J. Brown, Cambridge; *The Pilgrin Progress*, ed. Wharey, 1929. See th[illegible] 1830; Venabl 1888; studies by Froude: *Bunyan* [illegible] 30; J. Brow *Bunyan, his Life, Time and Works*, [illegible] *of the Sour of Bunyan's Allegories; with Espec*[illegible] *Pilgrimage Man*, 1904; G. O. Griffith, *John Bunyan*, 1927.

sources of religion, his literary genius does not require to be explained through reminiscences or secret borrowings.

Much labour has been expended in estimating his debt to his numerous predecessors. The central theme of *The Pil-*

which the best known is *The Pilgrimage of Man*, by Deguileville. Probably no one will ever know to what extent his

salvation; and as this teaching, for a simple and naïve mind, can only take the concrete form of an experience, each of his great works gives the story of the supreme experience in which is summed up every soul's life, of the decisive choice that it must make between God and the devil. In *Grace Abounding* we have the history of a conversion in its most immediate form, that of a personal confession. No autobiography has

and, like tragedy, through a catastrophe. *The Pilgrim's Progress* shows the way to the Eternal City. Calmer in tone, less strained, capable at moments of a smile, the dramatization

of inner experience here attains a ... and higher valu In following the heroes of Bunyan ... vicis tudes of their journey towards the dream of their hearts, o understands the attraction that lies in this symbolical a puerilely deep tale, and how it has held millions of readers whom it has presented the very picture of their most essent existence, of their incomparably strongest fears and hop A naïve ingenuity invests with a tangible appearance, eith concrete or personified, the snares of the flesh and those the mind, the help received from above, the perils, the bac slidings, the mortal anxieties which beset the soul in its que after salvation. The austere doctrine of a jealous God, of path strewn with pitfalls, of the fewness of the chosen, illustrated with the enthusiastic fullness of a faith that kno and that sees; and the sombre pathos of Puritan Christiani has here realized its powers with unequalled amplitude a clearness.

Allegories such as these are masterpieces; but one hesitat in pronouncing, when they are concerned, the words 'ar or 'genius,' because their greatness and beauty are whol impersonal. Supremely eloquent by virtue of his objectivit Bunyan has been the faithful mouthpiece of the religio conscience of a people. The sublimity of his work is that whi lies in the highest torments of a human life excruciated by t torturing uncertainty of its moral future; he has been able convey, to actualize this sublimity, but one feels that transcends his very being, his intelligence, his real inten Never has the inspiration of a creator been at bottom mo collective. And this creator must not be denied the mer of having allowed to pass within him, without breakin adulterating, or defiling it, the torrent of the emotions ar images which were stirring up so many less conscious pe sonalities in a more obscure way round him. But the po and the seer, in Bunyan, are but the supreme power of spiritual exaltation, with which the humblest forms of wh may be termed Puritan literature are almost always illum nated and uplifted.

As a writer, Bunyan has a natural gift that is undeniabl he feels and perceives with the greatest keenness; he knov how to express what he perceives; he knows how to tell a tal to link up the incidents in a drama; his style, racy and full sap, has nevertheless ease, lucidity, order, a sense of constru tion quite unexpected in one of so little culture. But this kee

force of perception is what comes to a believer from the stimulation of psychological life by faith; this skill in dramatic effect is the direct influence of the powerful hold which an obsessing vision has over the mind it sways; the qualities of this language are none other than those of the English Bible of 1611, which has been absorbed, as it were, and has become the spontaneous dialect of thought. Bunyan writes with the Bible, no doubt transposing it, and reducing it to a more

[illegible]

writings. Through the communion of faith, Bunyan has risen to an equal footing with the scholarly translators of the Scriptures.

3. *Fox, Ellwood.*—That there is also in this literary worth a rare felicity of temperament, cannot be denied as soon as one compares *The Pilgrim's Progress* with the works of other contemporary mystics. Among the sects who succeed in traversing the moral desert of the Restoration, often at the cost of cruel suffering, that of the Quakers is perhaps the most noteworthy. It comes into existence at the height of the Civil War, and gives English Puritanism its freest, boldest, and also most logical expression; it really bases belief on the contact alone of the Divine intuitively known. Not only is the authority of the Church thus ruined, but further, in a large measure, that of the Bible is weakened. Better than the pastors of to-day, or the ancient prophets, the 'inner light' brings revelation to every soul. Entering into conflicts with orthodoxy and with the less extreme dissenters; threatened from within by the extravagances of the 'Ranters,' in whom the visionary zeal produces effects too much opposed to the outward signs of grace; denounced, beaten, imprisoned, at times put to death, the Quakers survive, through that force of resistance which is often called into being by persecution.

[illegible]

The numerous writings in which these men defend them-

[illegible]

The writers themselves, however, dominate the works, and by the force, almost always by the strange gentleness also of their personalities, they preserve a living appeal to us. Of all this multiple production, the writings which still bear being read by others than specialists or devotees are those wherein we find revealed the moral figures of George Fox [1] and Thomas Ellwood.[2] With the latter, of middle-class birth and rather advanced culture, the enthusiasm is tempered by a simple humanity, and his story, which throws an intimate and familiar light upon the religious struggles of the Restoration, has the taking charm of a true sensibility, all mingled with a resolution not to be conquered. But neither Fox, nor even Ellwood, writes like Bunyan; their style, in comparison with his, shows the obvious traces of an inorganic syntax, of a language in transition, and in one word, the stamp of this time, above which Bunyan rises through the unique concentration of his visionary power.

To be consulted: Braithwaite, *The Beginnings of Quakerism*, 1912; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. vii, Chap. VII, vol. viii, Chaps. IV and XI; Clark, *History of English Nonconformity*, vol. ii, 1913; Dowden, *Puritan and Anglican*, 1900; Inge, *Christian Mysticism*, 1899; R. M. Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, 1909; C. A Moore, 'John Dunton, Pietist and Impostor' (*Studies in Philology*, Oct. 1925); Tulloch, *English Puritanism and its Leaders*, 1861; C. E. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism from the Restoration to the Revolution*, 1931.

[1] George Fox, 1624–90, the founder of the sect, whose scholarship was little better than that of Bunyan, dictated a *Journal*, which Ellwood, his disciple, corrected and published in 1649. The early text was published by the Cambridge University Press, ed. by Penney, etc., 1911; revised text, ed. by Penney, 1925. See studies by R. Knight (*The Founder of Quakerism, etc.*), 1922; Hodgkin, 1896; Jones, 1904; Stähelin, 1908.

[2] *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood, written by his own hand*, was published in 1714; ed. by Henry Morley, Universal Library, 1886.

CHAPTER VII

THE TRANSITION

1. *Limits and Features of the Period.*—The reign of William III (1688–1702) forms a transition in literature. The characteristics of the preceding period continue to be dominant, but in part tend to weaken. Along with these, some new traits appear. One feels that influences are at work, ... htly modify the moral ... ;in with; they further ... its completed form. ... already perceives the silent inner working of a force which will progressively overthrow the order of literary values.

The closing years of the Restoration were restless with a feeling of political instability. A hidden or open struggle was being waged between the principle of absolute authority in State and Church, and the idea of tolerance and constitutional liberty. The Revolution of 1688 puts an end to this crisis. It decrees that henceforth there shall be substituted

of social gravity. The upper middle class of business men and financiers forces its alliance upon the hereditary nobility; it obtains the division of power, and, as a new-comer, immediately makes its own preferences felt Society after 1688 remains aristocratic; but the spirit of the middle classes begins

the literary public is recruited, remains longer than the mass of the nation under the sway of the cynical habits of the preceding age. Artistic traditions will survive for some time the needs which called them into being. Hence the hesitant

character of the 'transition' that is now defining itself; as yet it is only a Restoration toned down, relaxed, in which one perceives the germs of more complete transformation.

In the psychological order of things, which is probably the most profound and explicative, the tendencies of a rational phase are not abolished; but in certain directions intellectualism is being sobered, if in others it remains the same; and in part of its domain, modes of thought and feeling directly opposed to it are revealing themselves. The empiricism of Locke replaces the fearless logic of Hobbes; Congreve's comedies succeed those of Wycherley; mediocre but worthy poets begin to pen edifying lines. The moralizing taste of the middle class is there, growing conscious of itself, not as yet daring, but preparing and waiting for its hour. The first [illegible] dates from these very [illegible] ry; the attack of Collier on the immorality of the stage coincides with it. In vain does Vanbrugh try to revive the insolent laughter of a disrespectful generation, and Toland foreshadow the offensive of deism against orthodoxy. A certain free, bold air, brilliant and at the same time coarse, now vanishes from literature as from life; the careless, disreputable revel of the Restoration has come to an end.

2. *Locke and Philosophical Empiricism.*—In 1688, Locke[1]

[1] John Locke, born in 1623, in Somersetshire, studied at Oxford, and was attached to Christ Church in 1659; he interested himself in science (elected a member of the Royal Society in 1668), and in medicine, which he practised occasionally. Political agent, medical adviser, and confidential counsellor to Shaftesbury, he took part in public affairs from 1660 to 1675. Then he travelled in France, sojourned at Montpellier. On his return to England he was compromised in the disgrace of Shaftesbury and followed his master's example by seeking refuge in Holland, where he waited for the Revolution. William III made him a commissioner of trade and plantations. From 1691 until his death in 1704, he resided with Sir Francis Masham, whose wife was the daughter of Cudworth, the philosopher. The three *Letters on Toleration* appeared, the first in Latin, the others in English, from 1689 to 1692. He published in succession: *Two Treatises of Government*, 1690; *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, 1690; *Some Considerations of the Consequences of the Lowering of Interest*, 1691; *Some Thoughts concerning Education*, 1693; *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695; he left several posthumous works, among them an examination of the theory of Malebranche on vision in God, and *The Conduct of the Understanding*. His writings on moral and religious philosophy provoked lively attacks, to which he replied (controversy with Stillingfleet, 1696–9, etc.). *Philosophical Works*, ed. by St. John, 1854; *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. by Fraser, 1894; *Thoughts Concerning Education*, ed. by Quick, 1880. See T. Fowler, *Locke* (English Men of Letters), 1880; Ch. Bastide, *J. Locke, ses théories politiques et leur influence en Angleterre*, 1907; studies by Fraser, 1890; Alexander, 1906; Hefelbower (*Relation of John Locke to English Deism*), 1919; S. T. Lamprecht (*Moral and Political Philosophy of John Locke*), 1921.

is fifty-six years old; but as yet he has scarcely published anything. The Revolution realizes his hopes, and enables him to give full expression to his ideas. From every point of view, he must be looked upon as the representative of the age when constitutional liberty and tolerance take definite shape.

The system of Hobbes is an extreme, almost exceptional form of English thought; that of Locke is an average form of it, broadly founded upon the instincts and desires of practical men who are prepared to find complexities in truth, and anxious to adapt themselves flexibly to what exists. It is a preliminary motive of prudence and wisdom that is at the source of his *Essay on the* [illegible] solving thorn [illegible] we must assu[illegible] critical attitu[illegible] here springs from an experimental good sense. It is a genuinely English tendency, also, which shows itself in the negation of any innate idea, if not of any innate activity of consciousness. The world is built up of the work of reflection upon the simple data of perception; and all the adventurous and often verbal wranglings of a scholastic philosophy vanish before the cold, clear light of a notion of mental life which modern psychology has singularly outdistanced, but the realism of which at that epoch was fruitful. General concepts originate in the operation of thought on the particular; and essential certitudes are founded: our 'ego,' by a direct intuitional feeling; the existence of God, by a rational demonstration; that of nature, by the repeated perception of its sensible characteristics.

In this, no doubt, we have only a relativist theory of knowledge; if geometry, that ideal science, which is a product of the mind itself, retains all its solidity, the science of nature is no longer anything else than a probable linking-up of empirical observations. Such a conclusion was a discomfort to traditional philosophy, and almost an avowal of impotence. But Locke is not in the least perturbed by it. The probability of natural sequences is sufficient for our intellectual desires, since it suffices for our needs; the normal use of our faculties is to employ them for the preservation and conduct of our lives. If knowledge is necessary, it is with a view to action.

The rest of Locke's doctrine is a series of practical applications of empiricism. His political theory, like that of Hobbes, admits a primitive state of nature and a social contract; but instead of simplifying these notions and developing their

logical consequences to the farthest possible limit, Locke turns to the observation of facts—contemporary facts—and here he discovers another 'nature.' Individuals are born free; they are subject to one law, that of moral behaviour. As this law is not always respected, *citizens of the same state* delegate the judicial powers to certain representatives; this delegation, limited and revocable, implies reciprocal obligation; and government is but a public service. The spirit of the English constitution could not be more accurately defined. As for property, it is founded, at least originally, upon labour. The economic theory of Locke is liberal, and sees the sources of English prosperity in commerce.

In theology, there is the same tranquil respect shown to facts—to these facts, the Scriptures and the moral needs of conscience. Questioned by a reasoning mind, which wants to find rules and motives of action, the Bible teaches a quite reasonable Christianity. In this atmosphere of lucid, calm belief, how could tolerance not be born? Experience shows us the varied nature of sects; religion is a purely personal matter; a church is a free grouping of believers; let all the churches therefore be given their liberty, with one reserve, the security of the State. The law will only intervene to ensure the observance of the social pact. The Roman Catholic and the atheist, according to Locke, thus find themselves, through their own fault, debarred from tolerance. . . . Finally his pedagogy emphasizes the practical virtues of education, as a formative agent of character; prefers the tuition of life to that of the universities; protests against the traditional exercises of the schools; and finds the best instrument of culture in the child's maternal language.

We have here no longer the intoxication of reason, the biting criticism of a Butler, or the ardent logic of a Hobbes; but a rationalism incorporated with the temperament itself, sobered, and *interwoven with the exigencies of life. It is* the properly English form of rationalism; and one feels that, by virtue of its calm, easy adaptability, it has no longer any of that fixity of principle, of that impassioned single-mindedness in the search for a systematic theory of the world, without both of which, in fact, there can be no pure rationalism. What Locke establishes is the original tradition of English philosophical empiricism; much more plainly than Bacon, he expresses the intellectual requirements of a people for whom the success of knowledge is the proof and substance itself of

truth. It is not only among the utilitarians but among the pragmatists of to-day that one must look for the direct posterity of Locke.

A thinker of this te

3.

concr

ality

An

find in his work more simplicity, a veiled irony, a calmer and franker acceptance of the hundred and one petty human mediocrities. His moral pessimism, as cruel at bottom as that of Swift, is restrained and mitigated by the tolerance of resignation. His attitude is that of a man who wants to live and let live, without illusions, but without bitterness; and who instinctively seeks all that protects, sweetens, and safeguards the frail life of the individual or of the State—tranquil affections, reciprocal indulgence, a wise mean in everything, the respect of order. This philosophy is not the most noble,

[1] George Savile, born in 1633, in Yorkshire, entered Parliament on the Restoration, served the Royal cause against Shaftesbury, and was created

but his *Advice to a Daughter* was read throughout the eighteenth century; his *Character of a Trimmer* defined for the general public the doctrine of compromise upon which the Revolution of 1688 was about to take its stand. Reasonable, but not dry, bold without cynicism, he judges the problems of religion, like those of private conduct or of government, in a spirit of supple realism which is decidedly the special character of the closing years of the century.

4. *Comedy: Congreve, Vanbrugh, Farquhar; Collier's Criticism.*—This character Restoration comedy could easily make its own; had it not established itself deliberately in the plane of realism? But the atmosphere has changed; and the brilliant talents which reveal themselves in the theatre after 1688 no longer ring with quite the same note as those of Wycherley and Shadwell.

The difference is at times slight; it is not, either, equally perceptible everywhere. Generally speaking, the plays of Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar show the persistence of a literary tone, by the force alone of an acquired habit, while the social realities that justified it have begun to change. These plays none the less, and in the strictest sense, belong to their time. Each author expresses in his own way the spirit of the transitional period.

In the case of Congreve,[1] the connection to be established is rather subtle. His refined fancy starts with realism, outgrows it, and gives itself full scope in a domain of pure intellectual imagination. Irony, wit, an insolent verve, are all elements with which the Restoration had been familiar. But here they are combined, harmonized, through the virtue of a superior

[1] William Congreve, born in 1670, near Leeds, came of an old-established family; prided himself on being at all times a man of the world and not a writer by profession; passed a part of his youth in Ireland, studied law in London, and at the age of twenty-three obtained a very great success with his first comedy, *The Old Bachelor* (1693). The plays which followed (*The Double Dealer*, 1693; *Love for Love*, 1695) added to his reputation; a tragedy (*The Mourning Bride*, 1697) did not lessen his fame. In 1700 his comedy *The Way of the World* was received coldly, and Congreve, at thirty, abandoned the theatre. Henceforth, he only indulged his talent in verse, and until his death in 1729, led a full and happy life, surrounded by his friends and enjoying a Government pension. *Dramatic Works*, ed. by A. C. Ewald (Mermaid Series); ed. by G. Street (Henley's English Classics), 1895; *Complete Works*, 4 vols., ed. by M. Summers, 1923; *Comedies*, ed. by B. Dobrée, 1925. *Incognita*, a short novel written in the youth of Congreve, was republished by Brett-Smith, 1923. See E. Gosse, *William Congreve*, 1888, new edition, 1924; G. Meredith, *An Essay on Comedy, etc.*, 1897; study by D. Protopopesco (*Un Classique moderne, William Congreve*), 1924; B. Dobrée, *Restoration Comedy*, 1924; D. Crane Taylor, *William Congreve*, 1931.

temperament of a writer and artist; the product of their fusion has a purity of matter, a delicacy of form, unknown to the Restor...
bred in; th...
gift, and c...
One also f...
comedy, from the pure and simple satire of manners, can now rise to their satirical idealization.

However interesting the first plays of Congreve may be, they form, each with its special traits, an artistic progression, leading up to one, the failure of which abruptly checked the career of a fastidious writer, but which is the masterpiece of his style, and of modern English comedy, *The Way of the World*. Here one must look, in a brief study such as this, for the features of an original art, of which only Etherege had given a sketch worthy to be compared with it.

A plot carefully contrived, but not too obviously artificial; contrasted effects, a repressed vigour which bursts out in certain realistic traits; moments of comic liveliness, and farcical scenes: such are the elements of variety which save the play from too constant a distinction, from too dry a preciosity. In this solid framework, which offers nothing exceptional, psychological raillery and dialogue are displayed with incomparable brilliance. Congreve's heroes are animated by a greatness which is above circumstance, which seems to be its own end, to raise life higher than itself, and to carry the painting of character on to the plane of a poetic and charming creation. There is here, with a personal touch, with an accent of cynical impertinence in which one catches the ring of the epoch, a rapture of imagination recalling the early comedies of Sh...

without depriving it of its self-command. The exact and restrained skill of a master ... these figures, ... fancy, without ... of the dialogue ...

meaning; it revels rather in impertinent sallies and witty

diversions, aided by a wonderful gift for repartee and neat phrasing.

However intellectual, in fact, it may be at its source, the art of Congreve would not show its full power, were it not for the exceptional felicity of a language in which, to tell the truth, nothing is left to chance. Behind that elegant exactness, that perfect propriety, that easy tone, that balanced and firm rhythm, very scrupulous care is bestowed upon details. No English writer has better possessed the natural art of making witty people speak, of lending to the most idle of their remarks the piquant touch of the unexpected; but here nature is enhanced by the most artistic desire to give each word its proper value, by the sense of its connection with its fellows, and of the general harmony in which it plays its part. Congreve's prose is the finest and the most brilliant of the age of classicism.

Capable of imbuing characters with life, a master of dialogue and style, has Congreve added to our knowledge of man? In this perhaps lies the weak point of an author who by virtue of several merits is equal to the greatest. But if the nonchalance of his temperament, and the lightness of his art, do not allow his comedy to penetrate very deeply into the study of the human heart, it probes well below the surface. Without having the value of revelations, the analyses he gives us of the feminine soul, and of a certain conscious and seductive coquetry, are of a very precious quality. And from all his art there emanates, like a discreet suggestion, a softened and almost indulgent pessimism. With much less brutality, Congreve is more of the true cynic that Wycherley; in his more sober tints is depicted a deeper vice, which sinks to the very conscience, and snaps the spring of moral indignation. The only virtue which is held up to us—and it is perhaps in itself a sufficient antidote—is sincerity.

Shocked by this indifference to orthodox rules, the taste of posterity has been somewhat severe on Congreve; and Lamb, in order to save him from the common jurisdiction, has had to plead that his fancy is innocuous, because it creates in the realm of unreality.

The contemporaries of Congreve had not the intuition of this paradox, which conceals a truth. In his last play, he had to struggle against a revolt of the demands of morality—a reaction which in their entire careers Vanbrugh and Farquhar had to reckon with.

Ten years after the Revolution, a cleric, Jeremy Collier,[1]

o be felt in various ways. But here the attack was direct, ull, and authorized; the Church was rising in arms against he theatre, to defend not only morality, but further, and specially, religion and the clergy, which comedy had often laced in a compromising light. The work of Collier has othing of the nature of a popular argument, simple and naïve; is a regular denunciation, scholarly and pedantic, and based— nly Aristophanes being excepted—on the example of the ncients, as on that of the French. Shakespeare, Dryden,

ce had been received among a large part of the public are ot sought out. The hidden link which connects this dia-

pon the 'fine gentleman'; in his defence of the 'rich citizens' gainst the gibes of the writers of comedy. . . .

The lists were now open. The authors involved did not efuse the challenge. They defended themselves by direct eplies, and allusions in their prologues, epilogues, and pre- aces; Dryden, alone, confessed his faults, without, however, enouncing his principles. The history of this controversy annot be summed up here. Its immediate influence has

novement, but along several lines; and the liberty of the age will reassert itself more than once. But apart from the mmediate object in view, and when studied in the light of

[1] 1650–1726. *A Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English age*, 1698. See study by Ballein, 1910

the evolution of manners, these pages assume an historical value. They encouraged the rallying of ordinary opinion to the necessity of a reform; they were the centre of a veritable crusade against licentiousness both in literature and in life, which did not produce very deep effects, but reassured alarmed consciences, repressed some outstanding excesses, and created the atmosphere of moral order and balance indispensable to the advent of classicism. The transition here studied owes to it one of its characteristics.

The first play of Vanbrugh [1] had done much to call forth the ire of Collier. With *The Relapse*, in fact, freedom of verve and boldness of situation reach their limit. Here realism is again given full play, with a somewhat heavy touch, that tempts one to liken it to the brushwork of the Flemish masters; and one might also say that, setting aside the example of Congreve, it is to Wycherley that comedy returns if the tone of the play were not so different from that of *The Plain Dealer*. In place of a harsh, bitter vigour, we have here a force of invention and Rabelaisian humour which spreads itself out, lively, huge, rollicking, sweeping off all the reserves of the spectator in an irresistible mirth. At bottom, there is behind this verve a pessimism of intelligence, a moral sincerity, a sanity of taste; and the work would not be properly understood, if one did not see in it at once a satire upon the new ideal of sentimentalism, already outlined by Cibber,[2] and the trace of the hold that this ideal was exercising even over rebellious temperaments, for some touches are introduced in *The Relapse* with a view to sentimental effect. This, however, is only a secondary aspect; Vanbrugh, above all, reveals his wit, his humour, his joy of a builder who constructs a play of solid workmanship, and who in it—one hardly knows how—joins two plots in one. This vigour, which tends to

[1] Sir John Vanbrugh, born in 1664, came of a Flemish family, established for two generations in England. Very little is known of his youth save that he was imprisoned in the Bastille in 1691. His plays, *The Relapse, or Virtue in Danger* (end of 1696), and *The Provoked Wife* (1697), were performed with great success. With the exception of a posthumous fragment (*A Journey to London*), the rest of his work is composed of imitations or translations (Boursault, Le Sage, Molière: *Squire Trelooby*, 1704; Dancourt: *The Confederacy*, 1705, etc.). His tastes, however, were in the province of architecture; he built several country seats and important buildings, among which were the Haymarket Theatre and Blenheim, the sumptuous mansion presented to Marlborough. He died in 1726. *Dramatic Works*, ed. by A. E. H. Swain (Mermaid Series), 1896; *Complete Works*, ed. by Dobrée and Webb, 1929. See the study by Lovegrove (*Life, Work and Influence of Sir John Vanbrugh*), 1902; B. Dobrée, *Essays in Biography*, 1925.

[2] See below, Book II, Chap. V.

mere brutality, develops frankly into such in *The Provoked Wife*, and singularly contradicts the edifying intentions which the author proclaims at times—perhaps under the influence of Collier, with whom he was even then bandying argument.

Viewed as a whole, Vanbrugh's comedies are above all

when they are reviewed with other works, to form a probable opinion as to what the truth really was. A Sir Tunbelly Clumsey, a Sir John Brute, a Miss Hoyden, are caricatures as much as types; but their interest is not less in one capacity than in the other.

It is permissible to find in Farquhar,[1] despite his merits, a somewhat tame copy of the fine audacity of his predecessors. He also was born with the temperament of a writer of comedy, gifted with facility and talent; but he came under the full influence of the wave of sentimentalism, which seems to have shaken the inner conviction of his art. His first plays are

guise the fact. His Irish nature led him to mingle laughter and tears; but it would appear that the desire, perhaps unconscious, to flatter the tastes of the middle-class public, who were more and more asserting their own preferences, explains the deviation of his art towards sentimentality.

sincere personality, despite the sacrifices which he chose to make to the fashion of the day, and it is also to be found in the varied nature of his inspiration, which has widened the

[1] George Farquhar, born in Ireland (1677), studied in Dublin, tried the

field of the manners studied, bringing into it new aspects o society and life: the army, the highways and inns, the seriou problems of the family, divorce, etc. A taste for nature anc truth reveals itself there. He has, on the other hand, verve and wit, knows how to sketch a character, and build up a plot; but none of these qualities is outstanding. A likable man and writer, he lacks vigour, and his best moments do not attain to decisive originality.

Tragedy, however, did not show a vitality equal to that of comedy. By the side of Dryden in his old age, the period 1688 to 1702 saw no new talent arise, except the mediocre one of Southerne.[1] The late revival of drama with Rowe is posterior by several years; and the middle-class spirit has not as yet followed up its invasion of comedy by reaching the field of tragic art.

5. *Poetry: Walsh, Garth, Blackmore, etc.*—The spirit of the transition is also represented in poetry, by a group of writers who share in certain common tendencies. None of them rises above an ordinary level of honourable talent; their merit lies more in their conscientiousness than in their inspiration; and this very mediocrity is a sign of the times.

Lustre is shed on the last years of the seventeenth century by one eminent poet, Dryden; but he no longer belongs, properly speaking, to this age. With Walsh, Pomfret, Garth, and Blackmore,[2] something exterior to poetry itself comes into the foreground. One must not try to discover too precise reasons in order to explain this interval between the generation of Dryden and that of Pope; chance, which did not bring Pope into the world some years earlier, is above all responsible. But in some measure, it can be explained by the atmosphere itself of a moment when the progress of technique and form, on the one hand, and the moralizing preoccupations of the

[1] Thomas Southerne, 1660–1746, already known by his comedies, enjoyed two great successes with his dramas, *The Fatal Marriage*, 1694, and *Oroonoko*, 1696, the latter a strange play, inspired by Mrs. Behn, not without a certain brilliance, and at times revealing a little of the fire of Lee.

[2] William Walsh, 1663–1708, the friend of Dryden and Pope, is in certain respects an intermediary between the two poets; his best-known poems are *Jealousy* and *The Despairing Lover*. *Poems*, in Chalmers and Johnson, *English Poets*, vol. viii. John Pomfret, 1667–1702, published in 1700 *The Choice*, which won a great and lasting success. *Poems*, ibid., vol. viii. Sir Samuel Garth, 1661–1719, is remembered for his poem *The Dispensary*, 1699. *Poems*, ibid., vol. ix. Sir Richard Blackmore (1650?–1729), a medical practitioner, wrote an epic poem (*Prince Arthur*, 1695), a philosophical poem (*Creation*, 1712), a *Satire on Wit* (1700), an heroic poem (*Eliza*, 1705), etc.; essays in prose, a translation of the Psalms, etc.; was praised by Addison, ranked highly in middle-class opinion, but later fell into discredit. *Poems*, ibid., vol. x.

middle class, on the other, threaten to weigh down and damp the flight of poetic imagination.

So that there scarcely remains anything worthy of praise in these writers, save their intentions; the correct and polished regularity of the verse of Walsh; the soberness, the amiable good sense of Pomfret; the laboured imitation of the *Lutrin*, not without wit and skill, which Garth effected in his poem; and with Blackmore, a certain noble ambition, which is too frequently given over to edifying nonsense, and loses itself in arid deserts, but which shows itself capable upon occasion of vigour, of subtle and compact argumentation, of enthusiasm even, and eloquence. Neither the beauties of single passages,

—despite the
so well the
compense an
authors who

just apply methods and formulae, or seek in the moral conscience alone the reasons for writing in verse.

To be consulted: Ballein, *Jeremy Collier's Angriff auf die englische Bühne*,

by when the writers of the first decades of the eighteenth century enjoyed a pre-eminence of merit as compared with their predecessors or their successors.

But this title of 'classical,' to which they did not dare lay claim, would have gratified their most cherished wishes; i answered to their deepest desires; it well defines the nature o their doctrine, their effort, and their faith. To use the term therefore, is to remain faithful to their actual intent, and t the consciousness they had of themselves. By observing th harmonious set of rules which seem to preside over beauty as realized by the noblest civilizations of the past, and a imitated with brilliant success by French culture, these writer wanted to endow England, and believed that they did d so, with a literature which was polished, rational, and perfect and which could be created only in a century of refined an supreme elegance. They lived up to their ideal of classicism in thought and in will; and so this name can justly remai attached to them.

To use it to-day is at once to give it a new meaning ...d at all ... nscious ... derive from an inward preference, of which even those who experienced it had no clear idea. The true source and th real *quality of English classicism are of a psychologica* nature. Its ideal, its characteristics, its methods, all resolv themselves into a general searching after rationality. Th pleasure of being able to understand, the easy sense of simpl orderliness, a smooth balance in ideas as in forms, such is th end pursued in those days by the great majority of thos who think and write.

This is equivalent to saying that the intellectual phase o the moral rhythm, the beginning of which had been definitel marked by the Restoration, is continued after this period The transition from 1688 to 1702 introduced slight difference into its intimate quality, but without altering its nature This phase of the rhythm is even amplified with the nev

essentially rational is not the work of a generation; it ca come fully into its own, be securely established, only after process of inurement, through which the average instinct

have been adapted to it, and every perceptible difficulty has been smoothed away. One may say that the age of Pope lives more fully, more spontaneously at the pitch of that dominant intellectuality, which during the preceding age was chiefly an irresistible impulse, a kind of contagious intoxication. The Restoration had turned Reason herself into a free, adventurous guide; classicism now makes her a clear and calm adviser. Set modes of thought have now been formed, habits acquired and fixed. This way a tendency has to consolidate by getting more deeply rooted, is a normal consequence, whenever its free play is not impeded, of the energy which first started it on its course; this phase of consolidation precedes the moment when the very success of a mood, and its too exclusive dominance, will prepare the exhaustion of its resources, and the awakening of an inverse need, which will give rise to a transition. Already at the end of the seventeenth century, such minds as those of Sir William Temple, Halifax, and Locke showed the maturing in advance of the elements about to produce classicism.

Circumstances are very largely favourable to this development, and hardly thwart it. The Revolution of 1688 does not constitute a break with the past; it inaugurates an organic and regular progress. The upper middle classes associate themselves with the nobility in the exercise of power; a more extensive section of the nation participates in political influence and directs culture. The great merchants and financiers who thus rise into social prominence are the wealthy descendants of the 'citizens' of the Puritan Republic; they retain all the vigour of a class that is making headway; but on the other hand, their moral temperament is subdued by the effect of prosperity, and of coming into contact with circles where refinement is of longer standing; they have in them the feeling for social discipline, the respect for all consecrated dignities; with time, they will merge in the aristocracy; meanwhile, they accept from it its scale of literary values. They have no new demands to bring forward in aesthetic matters; on the contrary, the need for order and balance suits their instinct, which is rapidly becoming conservative. The classical ideal of art, elaborated under the Restoration in an atmosphere of aristocratic elegance, finds full realization during the reigns of Queen Anne and George I in a broadened society, whose members are growing more numerous and so diverse, but where the spirit of the literature is

dergoing no essential change. The upper middle classes
: converted to this ideal; at a later date, they will become
old it against the

drawing it, as it
re, to them. They have their deep-rooted needs, their
ecific tastes; realists, capable of utilitarian aridness, they,
wever, never abjure, as a body, the emotive powers, of
iich they feel the hold upon life; capable of yielding to
e attraction of fashionable cynicism, bringing into political
d social intercourse certain forms of corruption, of venality,
iich are perhaps more natural to them than to other classes,
ey have nevertheless ingrained in them the instinctive
spect for moral laws; they require to live in a moralizing
mosphere, if not in an atmosphere of unblemished purity,
order to be at peace with conscience, and feel secure from
vine retribution. A first softening of sentiment, a first
d partial reform in manners, are as early as the end of the
venteenth century the psychic counter-assurances in which
e middle classes reveal their own individuality, and which
able them to identify themselves with the intellectual order
classicism.

The crusade of Collier, the adversary of immorality in the
eatre, has already been mentioned.[1] Other signs evidence

otive and source of pleasure in a group of comedies, then
the first dramas of middle-class inspiration. Here again,
e influence of the *Spectator* will have been announced and
epared. A breath of tenderness in the literary and social
mosphere, a relaxing in the characteristic tension and
yness where the witty verve of the Restoration throve and
panded, are already perceptible in the opening years of the
ign of Anne. The influence itself of the middle classes is
und up with these moral changes by very close and definite
nnections, which a careful study of the time enables one
grasp.

[1] See above Book 1, Chap. VII, sect. 4.

...nglish classicism is really based upon a ta
nise, hardly conscious of its existence, with an
l principle, the opposition of which, indirect or co
e aesthetic order of things, is not immediately
in the psychological order, that is to say, in a
e clear self-awareness has not as yet penetrated
who had the best intuition of this compr
on and Steele, were only themselves very va
of it. To their way of thinking, as to that of the
eared that the observance of moral standards an
ness of pure modes of living were associated by a na
with classical taste. In fact, the motive force be
orm in manners was a religious preference, t
ner an emotional motive, and finally a mystic
of sentiment, which accompanies and sustai
movement of the same character, and of tl
. The one and the other contradict the pu
of a rule of life and art based entirely upon
et duality introduces a germ of transformati
the innermost elements of classicism, at th
s full flowering. The eighteenth century will
the slow development of this germ; and to stuc
partly be to try to account for such slow grov
ry Forms.—In summing up the inner origi
it seems paradoxical to insist upon an aspe
al life that is foreign to this doctrine itself.
effort, and the first awakening of sentiment,
he literary point of view, an integral part of
classicism. This develops and is worked ou
nce—that wishes to be serene—to all that c
ance the harmonious, regular order of for
and the exactness of inspirations. But there
ore and something else, in the success of a scho
xims it invokes, or the ends it pursues in f
Classicism reassured the vital instinct of t
who were in positions of control, because
erarchy, an equilibrium; these classes, in tur
in accepting it, because at the same time i
ntroducing a provisional and superficial, bu
decency and fitness into the life and feeling
e sobered atmosphere of the time of Queen
partial and as yet timid resum...
l emotional life, enabled c

freely, and also permitted the bold negative spirit in thought

the final advent of classicism; with them, a rational artistic impulse, and the desire for a benevolent, slightly sentimental correctness in behaviour, approach so closely to each other as to enter into intimate contact.

The association of these two elements is in other ways made easier by the existence of intermediate shades. Classicism in England hardly ever shows itself in a state of absolute purity.

word, an image, a movement, an accent, with all the writers of this age. The relatively less pure character of British

so far as they are not openly accessory, are actually so by a kind of hidden adaptation. But one must not overlook the men themselves in the study of circumstances. Certain temperaments, and certain individuals, come to the fore in time for the complete realization of this age. Writers are

found to illustrate these dominant tendencies brilliantly, in diverse ways. Pope, and the group of poets who ackn- ledge or tolerate his superiority, are naturally the centre o literature so attentive to the laws of form, that the cadenc and compact expression of an idea is more precious in th eyes than the idea itself.

Close to the poetry dominated by reason and correctness must be grouped the various expressions of critical thought and, so to speak, of active rationalism; and as its activity is now almost universal, we have thus a gathering of many provinces: moral philosophy, criticism, satire, history, politics; and in this vast realm, Swift is king. Another group is constituted by the middle-class writers, with whom classicism shows itself slightly coloured by a moralizing and secretly sentimental intention; and here, Steele and Addison are to be grouped with Defoe despite the differences of their literary temperaments. Lastly, one must survey at one glance all the dissident writers—such as clearly show the spirit of the future, and the beginnings of the literature of sentiment. Philosophy, religious thought, comedy, drama, and poetry, will all supply materials for this synthesis of the elements through which the age of classicism, when inwardly tested, reveals, just as did the Restoration, an inner dissonance.

The merely aesthetic plane in which the history of literature is usually placed tends to simplify overmuch our mental picture of successive epochs, by neglecting to excess the secret differences within each age. A study of these differences helps one the better to understand the hidden connection between periods, and the movement which makes them grow one from another. In the light of this analysis, the works of writers glow with an inward transparency, which enables us to grasp the development of their forms, and the links which unite these with the corresponding creative inspirations.

The classical period, however diversified it may appear to us, however fraught with internal dissidence, is yet a relatively coherent and ordered phase. Artistic expressions in it are more uniform than inspirations. For while the first are connected with the second as effect is with cause, a rigorous causality is here out of the question. In so far as different moods are capable of submitting to identical or analogous laws of expression, the wholly relative moral unity of this age hardens into a more strongly marked artistic unity. This is a common feature of epochs in which art disciplines itself, and

tends towards the fixity of a balanced quality. To study the methods by which this hardening is effected, and the reasons

[illegible]

the stamp of a truly dominant character.

To be consulted: Ashton, *Social Life in the Reign of Queen Anne*, 1883; Barbeau, *Une Ville d'eaux, etc; la société élégante et littéraire à Bath sous* [illegible]

the Eighteenth Century, 1700–85, ed. by W. H. Durham, 1915; Elton, *The* [illegible]

French Poetry, 1660–1750, 1924.

CHAPTER II

THE CLASSICAL SCHOOL OF POETRY

1. *The Sovereignty of Form.*—To study the history of literature from the inner point of view is to try to reach the last accessible source of invention and expression itself. The price paid for this advantage is that an analysis thus carried out is not laid within the plane of what is, after all, the constitutive fact of a work of art: its form. No doubt, form is bound up with inspiration by links no less close than supple, which allow it a relative freedom, but which permit us, when once the artist has created, to inquire why he has expressed himself in such or such a manner. Nevertheless, to aim above all at a classification of writers and their works based on the quality of the impulse which animates them, is only to give a derivative value, as a principle of study, to the art in which this impulse is clothed.

Such a method would risk neglecting too much the interest, often sovereign, of the form, were it not that it is compatible in fact with the most attentive study of expression. The one thing needful is for it not to be exclusive, but to admit in practice the necessary adjustments. The occasion for a compromise presents itself very naturally, when a school or an age in literature has chosen form as the principle of its identity, and has put its very self into it. In such a case, it is more useful to accept this preference; to view everything from the standpoint of form, to begin with it, and to work back, in the last instance, to the moral attitudes which have been the real source of it. For to do so is only to modify the order of the factors, and to choose a convenient method of explanation.

English classical poetry founded itself upon the scrupulous searching for a perfection, the elements of which almost all reside in the domain of expression. A certain quality, not of creative emotion, nor even of ideas, but of the order which binds them together, of the language which expresses them, and of the verse which gives measure to this language: such are its main demands. It follows that the absence of emotion

does not in principle destroy this poetry, and that the nature of its theme is left to its own free choice. Carried away by the dialectic movement which sways this age, poetry then is almost always busy with the exposition or criticism of theses. It almost wholly belongs to the class of polemical or argumentative writings. Now, such is also, indeed, the character, at this epoch, of most of the other branches of literature; and, therefore, one should only, from the strictly inward point of view, allot a very small space to the study of the poetry; this should be all, with certain exceptions, examined at the same time as the prose. One single chapter—that which embraced the diverse aspects of 'rationalism in being'—would absorb three-quarters of the classical age.

It is only in appearance that this would be a paradoxical result. But it is probably best, for practical convenience, to avoid it. Therefore, we shall not attempt to separate all that is argumentation, analysis, satire, or discussion in verse from poetry; and the versified work of Pope, animated and sustained as it is from beginning to end by the spirit of demonstration, if one leaves aside the flashes of lyricism, will assuredly be part and parcel of this domain, preserving the formal unity assured it by the imperious claim of its prosodic style. With Pope, one must also link up the contemporary poets, the school over which he presides; and survey at one glance the mass of an abundant literature, the essential characteristic of which, according to a tradition here justified, will be that it is written in verse.

2. *Pope: Early Poems.*—The life of Pope is difficult to sum up.[1] To all appearances rather calm, it is nevertheless in a

[1] Alexander Pope, born in London (May 1688) of middle-class parents—his father was a linen-draper—and Roman Catholics, remained faithful to their creed, which entailed, in addition to special taxes, his exclusion from the universities. Puny and delicate of health, he read ancient and modern writers, giving himself a classical education which, if not solid, was certainly wide. The years of his precocious youth, when he was already the very careful and polished writer, were spent at Binfield near Windsor. The *Pastorals* (1709), the *Essay on Criticism* (1711), *The Rape of the Lock* (1712, revised 1714), *Windsor Forest* (1713), form the group of early poems, with occasional pieces, all of which were collected in a first edition of his *Works* in 1717. Recognized as the most brilliant among the new poets, he devoted ten years of labour to a translation into verse of Homer (*Iliad*, 1715–20; *Odyssey*, 1725–6), which brought him a competence; he took up residence at Twickenham, in a villa which he adorned with gardens and grotto-work, and where he received his friends, among whom were some very important personages (Bolingbroke, etc.). His enemies did not occupy less space in his life; they drew from his pen the *Dunciad* (in its first form, 1728; revised in 1729, and especially in 1743); countless allusions to individuals give an edge to the *Epistles* and *Satires* (imitations, for

constant turmoil of vexation, inflicted upon it by a restles nervous, unstable self-consciousness. Forced by his health t live in relative seclusion, he does not find repose even ther but is agitated by the clashing of rival political interests, i which he takes a side, without actually engaging therein; c by literary strife, which stimulates his verse and supplies th subject matter of his work; or lastly and chiefly by his person quarrels, which most often envenom the other conflicts. Fro every point of view his life is intimately wrapped up in t history of his time. Despite its occasional meanness, th lapses in dignity, or even in conscience, which are traceab to a morbid vanity, this life is remarkable for the con tinuous effort it displays, the ever-scrupulous labour of th artist, the success of an ambition which Dryden had n fulfilled to the same degree. The legislator of Parnassu like Boileau, and the undisputed master of an art and of school, he finds himself on an equal footing with the grea He it is who establishes in England the social prestige of th man of letters. Moreover, he is a shining example of wh care for perfection and style can be.

His career as an author is longer than one would be led t suppose from the actual duration of his life, for his adolescen is part of it, and not the least important. His first poen form a natural group; in them are to be found, together wi a growing mastery of touch, an array of spontaneous qualiti which are already, at this early stage, all they will ever b It has even been possible to say that the *Pastorals* remain a sense the masterpiece of Pope. These little imitations Virgil, adapted to modern life and English soil with ve dexterous skill, are the fruits of a conscious inspiratio slightly artificial, stimulated by literary memories, a teeming with reminiscences; but they also evidence a pr

the most part, or adaptations from Horace), forming with the *Essay on M* (1733-4) an ensemble, the parts of which, at a later date, were broug together by Warburton. Pope also edited Shakespeare (1725) and publish his own correspondence which is, in part, faked (1735, etc.) He died in 17 *Works*, ed. by Elwin, Whitwell, and Courthope, 1871-89; *Poetical Works*, by Ward, 1869; *Rape of the Lock*, ed. by Holden, 1924; *Essay on Criticism*, by Ryland, 1900; *Essay on Man*, ed. by Pattison, 1872; *Satires and Epistles*, by Pattison, 1874. See biography by Courthope (*Works*, vol. v); the *Anecdo* of Spence (1820 ed.); studies by L. Stephen (English Men of Letters), 18 O. Elton, *The Augustan Ages*, 1899; Dennis, *Age of Pope*, 1906; Saintsbu (*History of English Prosody*, vol. ii, 1908); L. Strachey, 1925; A. Warren (*P as Critic and Humanist*), 1929; Edith Sitwell, 1930; E. Audra, *L'Influe française dans l'œuvre de Pope*, 1931. See Bibliography of Pope by R. Griffith (1923, etc.).

cocious talent, the sincerity of which is here indistinguishable fron artifice. These lines of admirably easy flow, helped on by an already expert cleverness, which introduces charming arabesque work into their regular pattern, are genuine outpourings in a way; never was the language of poetry more liquid, nor its measure more even and smooth.

More ambitious, and with greater elements oi interest, *Windsor Forest*, a poem of a not dissimilar kind, already betrays the decline of an art, the absolute purity of which is only compatible with themes of narrow, superficial character. Another poet appears here, who is the narrator, the reasoner, [illegible]

the effort made by the thought reveals itself in some unevenness and intermittence of flow. Upon a nature that is personal, elegiac, irritable, without much depth, the rational spirit of [illegible] ment. [illegible] the ver[illegible] argumentation; yet it is not certain if the poetry itself has not lost something in the process. *Windsor Forest* has still to offer a freshness of atmosphere, a feeling for nature that is confined to familiar horizons, but sincere within these restricted limits; [illegible] which

[illegible] e same direction. As often happens at this epoch, the aspiration after a big subject, not being sustained by a strong creative mood, stops half-way at the compromise of a mock-heroic intention; the classical period is the golden age of parody. The rational attitude of the writer tends to make him critical, and of a modern turn of mind, while on the other hand, his doctrinal principles force upon him the imitation of ancient models, the gravity of an aesthetic cult; this forced respect, this obsession of the past, imply a constraint, and the spirit

This is not to say that *The Rape of the Lock* is a parody in quite the same way as so many other contemporary works; the subject, however unimportant it may be, has an interest in itself; and the contrast of its delicacy with its serious tone and the traditional trappings in which it is set, brings out its somewhat quaint grace. Nevertheless, it is permissible to think that all this is very artificial. The ingenuity, the wit, an often striking verbal felicity; an occasional note of true imaginative poetry, in the pretty fancy of the sylphs; the skilful handling of the conclusion, so discreetly hinted; shafts of satire which, though light, yet penetrate—cannot make us forget that the laboured application of this art is here excessive; or efface prolix passages, traces of vulgarity, the musky atmosphere of a fashionable elegance, to the prestige of which the poet bows even when he claims to dominate it. The form reveals a greater proportion of periphrases and indirect expressions.

The *Essay on Criticism* is the crowning effort of these early poems. Here one feels that Pope has found his new manner. Since the inner movement of his temperament—accentuated, no doubt, by the influences of the time—carries him decidedly away from the lyrical mood, it is towards literary or moral criticism that a safe instinct inclines him. The search and expression of rules and laws, the intellectual activity which judges, values, or legislates, which combines principles or distinguishes shades, such is the kind of poetry best adapted to the thought and creative impulse of the classicism of 1710. The germ of this work is in a theory of criticism, of its maxims and duties. Pope, no doubt, wants to be a creator no less than a lawgiver; he reminds us that criticism was first of all the servant of the Muses; he upbraids the pedants who claim to be able to make a good poem out of recipes. But the hierarchy thus established is only on the surface; at bottom, the classical age believes that it can understand, and define in terms of reason, all the conditions of the beautiful. A well-taught and well-informed judge must therefore be infallible; his precepts will open up the way to perfection; without any possibility of error; in following his counsel, one will be ensured against all risks. His high office is second to none; he is, in a sense, the supreme man of letters. And thus, from the problem of how to judge works, Pope by a natural gradation, quite smoothly, passes on to the production of the works themselves. The example of Horace and

Quintilian, whom he is constantly imitating; of Boileau, whom he has constantly in mind, carries him away, without, indeed, any resistance on his part; and in the end it is an 'Art of Poetry' that he gives us.

The doctrine herein formulated is not cast, as it were, at one stroke, or built up into a firm consistent whole; the thought of Pope, while sharp and clear, is never really synthetic; it is often fragmentary. In a very imperfect order, what is taught is still indeed the gospel of classicism. The starting-point is the study, the compulsory imitation of nature. Thus, one can find in Pope something of the spirit of the moderns; in a less precise manner than Dryden, he allows us to see that he makes his own this essential claim: the right to judge the ancients themselves in the light of a superior principle; the necessity, for the most correct art, of accepting a free inventiveness, a force of originality which is the contribution of the literatures of the new world.

No doubt, following Boileau and Dryden, Pope identifies nature with the example of the ancients; the latter, in their discovery of rules, did not invent them; they formulated for all time the conditions of artistic work. And this is how they have come so close to perfection. To study them, to assimilate their practice, is to ensure oneself in the most effective way possible against error. But their example itself, and the true spirit of their doctrine, teach us at times the transgression of the rules they *followed, in the interests of a* more inward and spiritual observance. With Quintilian, Pope admits that there exist beauties which are above precepts; intuitions, we should say, which the artist cannot justify in abstract right; which appeal to the heart, without passing by way of the faculty of judgment. This breadth of thought, which proves that Pope has grasped the truest idea of ancient art, is again to be seen in the emphasis he lays upon the constructive and sound character of classicism; upon the preference of the whole to mere details; upon the need for a positive criticism, more attentive to qualities than to faults; it is also revealed in the relation he establishes between art and historical environment; each writer, according to him, ought to be judged from the point of view that was his own. Finally, his literary orthodoxy is steeped in a kind of humanity; a moral, almost sentimental element finds its way into it; the critic has a social mission to fulfil; he values not only books, but men and manners; the enlightened, indulgent censor of

literary works, he will not tolerate vice. The close connection between a triumphant classicism and a reform in morals, a first reassertion of the English character through discipline, would thus not fail to show itself in Pope, at the same time as in Addison.

These principles once laid down, the *Essay* very soon loses itself in details. Its general teaching, thus summed up, leaves the impression of something that is rather rich, rather supple. Beside the dogmatism, some elements of relativity appear in it; beside the pure rationalism are to be found the traces of a free and modern aesthetics of sentiment. But if one inspects this doctrine more closely, and examines it in the light of Pope's practice, one recognizes that its pliability is due above all to the assimilative faculty of a mind that is still more skilful than consistent. In laying diverse elements side by side, Pope has not been anxious really to combine or to amalgamate them. He draws his sustenance from the common treasure of critical wisdom, profits by the examples of the ancients and moderns alike, and has the merit of welcoming their most fruitful suggestions, of entertaining a liberal and realistic notion of art that is more concerned with things than with words, with qualities than with rules. In fact, the *Essay on Criticism*, in its central effort and purpose, is a lesson in literary conscientiousness, care, and correctness. Therein lies its interest, as soon as it quits the easy domain of generalities; there it is that the mass of its precepts really bear weight. Much more than invention, Pope in effect teaches, it is the form that counts. The ideal talent consists in renewing through expression thoughts that may be commonplace. It is in this sense that he himself lived and realized his doctrine; in this sense also his contemporaries understood and accepted it.

The gospel of classicism is, therefore, despite everything, broader and less dogmatically rational than will be its practice. It has better defined the sovereign liberty of art than it has profited thereby. For it lived above all through the intellect; and artistic creation is not, in itself, of the intellectual order.

3. *The Translation of Homer.*—To translate the ancients is the narrowest application, but the most direct as well as the surest, of the doctrine of classicism. Dryden had set the example, and it had found many followers. Translations in verse abound in the time of Pope, as during the Restoration. Tonson, the publisher, whose relations with the writers form

an important chapter in literary history, publishes in his *Miscellanies*, as early as 1709, an episode which Pope has translated from the *Iliad* The great poet, already consecrated by success, is then implored on all sides to attempt a complete translation of the Homeric books; this would be to answer the need of public taste, and to establish his fame definitively. Pope accedes to the solicitations of his friends —Addison, Steele, Swift, Garth, and Congreve; Lintot, the rival of Tonson and Pope's usual publisher, makes him the most liberal offers. He is not at all specially prepared for the task; but he will direct his efforts by reference to former versions in English, Latin, and French. The burden of this

Pope remains first and foremost the translator of Homer.

His achievement, in a way, is quite a feat. This version, which was read and admired throughout the whole of the eighteenth century, and even after, preserves to-day a remarkable firmness of texture; this it owes to the painstaking scrupulousness of a writer to whom art was synonymous with conscience. Pope had the gift of neat phrasing and a rare faculty of

work of s

it. He ha

has adorned it with an elegance which is far from Homeric, but which lends a distinguished touch to the whole. The expression, always carefully selected, possesses a forcefulness, a dignity, and even at times a certain power of evocation. Strains of poetry, an echo transposed into the tonality of this age, can also be heard in it.

But it suffices to let oneself be carried away by the movement of these rhymed couplets, to catch the deep dissonance which parts their music from the rhythm of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Their cadence, regular, balanced, short, and monotonous, is an instrument of suggestion quite different from the long and flexible Greek hexameter. And over and above this metrical difference, is revealed the irreconcilable

the subject takes us farther and farther away from such an

outlook. It seems to us that apart from the inevitable in meaning, a graver and more fundamental error be the very quality of the civilization and moral life which wishes to reproduce; the equivalents which he presents an ideal which is falsely refined, politely amorous, art and one in which the naïvety of the original is replaced pompous majesty. The simple figure of the antique e the minds of this time was haloed with an august gran and Pope is constantly keying up the thought, the fe and the words to what they ought to be. His diction, teems with abstract turns, stereotyped epithets, an elements of a vocabulary then in the process of har into a cold nobleness of expression, is mostly responsil our impression of an absolute anachronism. Colerid said that the translation of Homer is to a large extent a able for the formation of 'poetic diction' in the eigh century.

4. *Moral and Satirical Works.*—Assuredly, while sl his growth in the direction demanded by classicisn feeling for which he strengthened more and more withi self, Pope developed his talent for satire and argum verse; and it is in this province of literature that] written his strongest works. Pure poetry was not the for it; but the vigour of a temperament was thus dis and it produced its most characteristic fruits.

The ambition to be a philosopher grew upon Pop the passing of time. The concise and brilliant form his expression is better attuned to ideas, is more in ha with moral reflection, critical judgment, and the wri epigrams, than with any other theme. And no dou couplet, that small, closed, self-sufficient group of se compact words, hardly allows of a consecutive link of thought, of long, complex reasoning that is loade qualifications, of cumbersome periods garnished with c the argument thus tends to resolve itself into an unl series of clearly defined and equal propositions; it en begins again at each step. It proceeds therefore by ac lation, rather than by true progression; once a result is a it passes to another thesis, most often without any tran And within each couplet, the rhythm, the balancin relation of the two lines which answer each other, the two half lines, separated by pauses for the mo regular, suggest a simple equilibrium, made up of the

tion of two terms; antithesis is the general type of which the rhetoric of Pope has an infinite number of varieties to offer. All this can hardly be adapted to a truly systematic statement.

But there is really no question here of system. Pope borrows his moral ideas; he combines them just as imperfectly as he did his literary ideas at an earlier stage; he simply reconciles them through the instinctive unity of his temperament. His attitude is that of a receptive eclecticism. His [illegible] com- [illegible] tem- [illegible] and [illegible] ous [illegible] to discover therein a connected notion of the universe and of life; or to draw up the general plan in which were to have been included, with this poem, the other *Moral Essays*, discontinuous fragments, written at very different times, mostly before Pope had any notion of a possible synthesis, and offering in no way the internal proof of a common intent.

There are none the less among them strikingly successful pieces. The didactic work of Pope is one of the triumphs of classicism. The *Essay on Man* comes very near to what true philosophical poetry can be, and at times attains to it. With a little more warmth of soul, a little more imaginative ardour, the parts of this uneven rhapsody might have been amalgamated into one single mass; as it stands, it has its inspired passages, and its vehement tone lifts up and cheerfully carries the weight of the ideas.

Less strained, more familiar, brightened by a sly mockery, by an irony which would like to be always benevolent or at least master of itself, but which cannot succeed in concealing the bitterness of personal grievances, the *Epistles* and *Satires* are also remarkably successful examples of this special kind of poetry. Here it is that Pope is most at ease; his qualities fit him admirably for versified talk. Whether the form of the dialogue is adopted, or the poet is addressing a chosen friend, it is always in action that the mind which occupies the stage is shown; the thought has thus a liveliness of movement, a spontaneity, an animation, without which the moralizing would run the risk of becoming heavy.

The first epistles, written shortly after 1730, have no other source, like the *Essay on Man*, than the philosophy of Bolingbroke; they develop commonplaces about the 'use of riches,'

the 'characters of men,' and 'of women.' It is in 1733 that Bolingbroke advises his friend to enliven his satire by a modernized adaptation of Horace. This method has already been used in France by Boileau, and in England by Rochester, Oldham, and Swift; Pope discovers in it a fit instrument for his verve, and employs it with delightful effects. His ironic praise of George II, under the crushing name of 'Augustus,' is a masterpiece. The after-taste of parody so natural to classical art is here commingled with the intellectual pleasure which accrues from the continual sense of the relations, of the suggested and implicit analogies or differences, between the present and the past. This constant and intentional semi-anachronism is not always handled with sufficient ease to be absolutely pleasing; but the suspicion of pedantry which might emanate from it is effaced by the irresistible effulgence of a witty malice, which, however, is too often sharpened and envenomed by a keen desire for vengeance and retaliation. Underneath disguised names, or recognizable initials, Pope has left us the picture gallery of all his enmities and his hatreds. Many of these full-length portraits are immortal. It is generally agreed, however, that with him virtuous indignation is often fed or even replaced by the smarting of a personality touched on the raw.

Recent research would tend to prove that Pope has sometimes to meet the initiatives of his adversaries. Still, his desire was to give himself the air of one persecuted; his attacks claim to be only of a defensive character. In fact, the story of the first *Dunciad* reveals the premeditated aggressiveness of a fiery mind, susceptible, quick to seize upon what is ridiculous and foolish, skilful in throwing it into relief, against authors at times really jealous or secretly malignant, but for the most part peacefully disposed. This, however, is a small matter; Pope has endeavoured to lend his work the apparent excuse of a provocation; it belongs, however, assuredly, to the spontaneous warring of talent against mediocrity. The impulse which gave birth to *The Dunciad* should be looked for in the common fund of satiric banter which was kept up in the friendly relations between Swift, Arbuthnot, Pope, and Gay, and which produced the successive avatars of Martinus Scriblerus, the symbol of the pedantry of the dull writer. The theme of the work is taken from the *Mac-Flecknoe* of Dryden; but Swift's influence is to be felt in a certain touch of stressed realism. It was revised on several

occasions; the edition of 1743 added to it a fourth book, substituted Colley Cibber for Theobald as 'King of Dun

An ambitious, sustained effort of literary and moral sa *The Dunciad* is inferior to the lighter productions in the s vein. The rather complicated symbolism, the fable, wh aims at being consistently allegorical, are beyond the structive faculty of Pope. The poem cannot conceal s constraint and frigidity; the moments of full power,

of the musty odour which at times emanates from the di sions of the scholar. It is a pity, also, that Pope did hesitate to upbraid the poetasters for their shabby clothe for their clumsy lines; and his attempt to pose as the cham of virtue as well as of wit is rather futile. The enormit the postulate upon which all satires rest, the fragility of dogmatism which judges and condemns, without ever trusting itself or the efficacy of the weapon it handles, awa a growing uneasiness in the reader. It is the triumpl

of keen and luminous perceptions. On the other hand, the writer knows how to convey this easy, happy exercise of intelligence, how to render it by the most suitable, the briefest and most telling words; and thus the pleasure which the poetry of Pope procures us rises primarily from a joyous intellectual activity which moves among ideas, seizes them, combines them, arranges them into groups, with so much ease that it seems to soar of itself in a full bright light, above the incertitude and confusion of human thought.

The art of expression, very careful and minute, aims at imparting and still further intensifying this sovereign ease. It succeeds in doing so chiefly through a cadence of the language, which is one with the rhythm of the verse. The heroic couplet is inseparably associated with the mastery of Pope. The effects he draws from it are less varied, of a less poetic quality than those of Dryden; but in a narrow scale they acquire an incomparable effectiveness. The alexandrine becomes very rare; the 'triplet' is exceptional; the pauses tend to settle permanently round the centre of the line; the free circulation of ideas between the couplets is repressed by a mental preference, which has become habitual, almost automatic, and which finds satisfaction in short and balanced expressions. The rhyme marks and stresses the end of the line, to a much greater extent than it can be said to add an aesthetic element, a musical touch or an effect of echoing repetition; it is often poor, and at times worse than poor. Thrown out in succession by a concentrated force of energy, which lets itself go each time without ever giving itself away or spending itself, for it retains perfect self-control, these lines are like glittering shafts; they have the elegance and cold gleam of polished steel.

The beauty, a beauty severe and still intellectual, is here the result of a perfect adaptation, in which the precision of the thought, the aptness of the terms, and the strong regularity of the rhythm, answer to each other, and blend in a nervous and brilliant eloquence.

6. *Diverging Elements.*—Does this poetry appeal only to reason, to spite, to a sense of comedy, to moral judgment? Is the pleasure it awakens to be found wholly in clearness, justness, and order? Or does it stir up sensations and emotions; does it allow for imagery, and does it move our feelings?

The elegiac poet in Pope died young; but he did not die all

at once. His voice is still to be heard in the early years of maturity. And even when the classical rhythm of thought and of verse holds full possession of him, some transitory moments will remind us that beneath the writer there is the man, and that his temperament is not simple.

No writer ever showed a temperament of ideal simplicity.

in it.

Several of the shorter poems are in this respect full of meaning

Ode for

musical

where the false lyricism is of a platitude which the verbal ingenuity cannot redeem; nor even *The Dying Christian to his Soul*, an attempt at a religious effusion, prompted by literary reminiscences, reinforced by classical memories, but of a relative sobriety, of a rather fine tenor of style, in which is

But one must take more seriously two poems which claim to be impassioned, and are so in a large measure. The *Elegy to*

of sentimental indulgence, complacent but

language conventional, despite fine poetic lines *Eloisa to Abelard* (1717) leaves one with a mixed impression, in a classical rhythm, through themes complex and curious, among which one makes out the study of an erotic obsession, and an ill-disguised libertinage of fancy, the eloquent outpouring of a soul in torment is powerfully sustained. Never has Pope been nearer to true inspiration. The language

itself bears the marks of an ardour which, on this occasion, at times, creates its form in untrammelled liberty. A force, a diffused audacity, are here concentrated in lines which are to be reckoned among the most certain preparations of Romanticism.

It is a rather analogous, but at the same time distinct element, that is to be found in the crude realism with which the correct art of Pope is frequently set off. What one should trace is here the taste for keen sensation, superadded to the intellectual desire for concrete truth; in other words, that aspect of realism by which it is closely related to the attitude of the Romanticists. This tendency of mind has urged Pope to 'versify'—according to his own phrase—the satires of Donne; it is to be seen very clearly in *The Dunciad*; and a passage like that in which is evoked the brilliant, corrupting voluptuousness of the lands of sunshine and of art (fourth book), proves that he possessed among his instincts the slumbering faculty, rarely awakened, of coloured suggestions, in which are united all the powers of the words, the images, and the rhythm. Elsewhere, his imagination is severely kept in check by the sobriety, the selection, and the moralizing character of the themes, although it preserves throughout a robust quality. In such passages, it becomes truly the main inspiration and the mistress of the poetry.

But these traits remain exceptional. Through its central, deliberate impulse, Pope's art resolutely moves during the whole of his career, further away from the inner, secret, magnetic attraction which already is silently bending the course of literature towards a new ideal. *The Dunciad* reacts against the symptoms of an awakening of the middle-class spirit, against the 'City poets,' whom it holds responsible for the decadence in taste. Pope does not progress, consciously, towards the future, but confines himself in a severe and lofty notion of letters, by virtue of which he remains, despite everything, the heir of the Restoration.

7. *Swift, Prior, Gay, etc.: Light Poetry.*—The orthodox poetry of the classical age—that which responds to its central originality and to its desire—does not include any very great names besides that of Pope. But numerous are the noteworthy or estimable talents which apply the same standard to the art of writing in verse.

Temperaments, here, do not show very great variety; it is possible to examine this literary output as a whole, and to

classify it according to the inner differences which separate the works.

In this way one recognizes first of all a group, and that the most important, in which the tendencies apparent in the *Epistles* and *Satires* of Pope are carried still further. Not that Pope, in fact, has furnished the model: this familiar kind of rhymed conversation is a natural outcome of Restoration verse; and the persistent action of the French example contributes to encourage it. Saint-Évremond, on English soil, had written 'petits vers' in the French manner; the continued radiation of French thought and influence is perceptible especially during the reign of Queen Anne in the ease with which this light, amorous, ironical, or jocular verse is handled. The inspiration of a Prior, at times, is hardly national; and the reader scarcely discovers anything English in his work save the language.

The object of this poetry, the pleasure it calls forth, are indeed the same as those which the work of Pope had in view. But in place of ambitious themes of ethics, criticism, or philosophy, Swift, Prior, and Gay reduce the scope of invention, and concentrate it habitually in brief pieces, better suited to the lively expression of a witty trifle, a mockery, or a paradox; and in obedience to the same instinct, the form is abridged or modified; the heroic couplet is most often replaced by the four-foot line, on which *Hudibras* had for ever left the imprint of its irreverence. And if there are any long poems to be found, they are almost all of a burlesque inspiration.

The personality of Swift is too strong not to break out in everything he writes.[1] The interest of his lines is that they reveal him to us; and to judge them by the wealth of their thought, the forcefulness of their eloquence, the vigour and the bitterness of the intentions with which they are loaded, they ought to make up the work of a first-rate poet. But this work, considerable as it is, is three-quarters composed of rapid improvisations, fugitive poems, where one feels the verve of genius; where the form, on the other hand, has not received the minute care demanded by classical finish. Elsewhere, more polished poems, or pieces in which creation has been so direct and sure that the idea and the words were born, so to speak, in an indestructible unity, have a very high

[1] See below, Chap. III, sect. 5. The poems of Swift have been edited by Mitford (Aldine ed.), 1866; and Browning, 1910. See *Swift's Verse, an Essay*, by F. E. Ball, 1929.

tiveness, a freedom of movement, a neat power of phrasing. Like Swift, he recalls Butler, in his octosyllabic measure and stressed rhymes. There is sincerity, along with wit, in many of these short poems (*A Song*, *The Secretary*, *Hans Carvel*, *The Lady's Looking-glass*, etc.); pieces of ironical or sensual badinage, which aim only at pleasing through the easy play of the intellect, the clever turn and pat fitness of the form, or the evocation of a purely unemotional love.

The inspiration of Gay[1] is a little more substantial. His light poems are not without merit, although they do not equal the supreme ease of Prior; one can discover here and there a note of conventional but pleasant lyricism, after the Restoration style (*Damon and Cupid*); a facile and piquant wantonness (*The Coquet Mother*); pretty touches, a rather genuine feeling

to-day seems to strike a very artificial note in its simplicity; and everywhere the 'poetic c
cruelly felt. Gay, like Prior
ally comes across popular
benefit from the transient contact, a fleeting accent (in *Down Hall*, etc.); but the interposing veil of pseudo-classical form hides from them the true character of this inspiration, and its promise.

The originality of Gay's talent is to be found elsewhere. in a clear-sighted realism, with an inclination to irony, which alternates between the sense of and search for the picturesque, and parody. There is in him a kind of intellectual cynicism that knows how to see freely and make us actually see, and

thus to emerge from convention; he renovates the superficial application of the classical ideal by virtue of the truth, concrete and therefore new and rich, of an object, even the most prosaic. His pastoral poem, *The Shepherd's Week*, claims to strike out boldly from the beaten path; it mixes archaisms imitated from Spenser, with descriptions of the actual world of shepherds which are exact—or pretend to be so. Despite the strange contrast between an artificial literary language and traits of rustic manners that are sometimes crude, and although under this crudity there still remain the traces of bookish lore, all this *fabliau*-like verve is sincere enough, and not devoid of raciness. Gay's object was to ridicule the use made by Ambrose Philips, in his pastorals, of a background of English observation; unwittingly, he revealed all the fertile novelty of rural realism. *Trivia*, in three mock-heroic cantos, describes, narrates, and celebrates the sights, the incidents, the perils of London streets; while, in a style of the most orthodox, advice on the equipment of the pedestrian is set off by mythological episodes. Never was a subject less rich in poetry; but the art, which is here mainly a question of skill, wit, and irony, extracts from this thankless matter a tolerably lively interest of mere form, in which the essential element is the piquancy of contrast; and because it describes with accuracy a definite local subject, this poem has the value of an historical document.[1]

This vein of dry precision is one of the merits by which classical poetry often redeems the coldness of its inspiration. It is to be found even in the agreeable though flaccid talent of Ambrose Philips; and his epistle *To the Earl of Dorset* describes the effects of a Danish winter with a sureness of touch which Thomson will not excel. But the precision of the vocabulary tends to become exceptional; the very development of the classical ideal contradicts it.

8. *Descriptive and Didactic Poetry—Poetic Diction.*—The ore ambitious works of those estimable poets do not merit long examination. The 'Pindaric' and official odes of Prior ave all the verbose aridity of this kind, in which the classical e thinks it due to its dignity to exercise itself just as much the Restoration. Clever tricks of style, feats in the art the versifier, no longer stir even a spark of animation in

[1] The taste for parody is again seen in the burlesque poem entitled *The ndid Shilling*, 1705, in which John Philips (1676–1709) imitated the style blank verse of Milton. See *The Poems of John Philips*, ed. by M. G. Lloyd nas, 1927.

all this dead literature (*Carmen Seculare*, etc.). And if, at times, there does remain a touch of life, it is when the intention of parody introduces some satirical truth into the pompous conventionality (*An English Ballad on the Taking of Namur*, 1695). Less happy, even in a relative measure, is the fancy to imitate the Spenserian stanza, modified by the addition of a final line of the most unfortunate effect (*Ode to the Queen*, 1706). *Alma, or the Progress of the Mind*, may very well relate in short Hudibrastic verse, and in a sometimes burlesque tone, the philosophic talk of three

heroic lines, somewhat more supple indeed, but still very regular (*Solomon on the Vanity of the World*)

Despite their great and lasting success in the eighteenth century, the *Fables* of Gay have not better stood the inroads of time. Here and there they have a piquant interest; but their short easy verse is of a jerky monotony; their theme is almost always mediocre, of a poor and forced invention; any impression of reality is destroyed by political allusions, or insipid gallantry; the animals reason and argue to excess; the morals are frigid and trite; and the tone of naïvety assumed is too obviously artificial. *The Fan* is a long drawn out and lifeless fancy: *Rural Sports*, where the pastoral has a serious aim, and at times succeeds in displaying some emotion, makes us regret, on the whole, the realism and the parody of *The Shepherd's Week*.

In these works of more ample design, that systematic attempt at fine language which has been termed 'poetic diction,' and which gradually becomes an essential element of classicism, gives itself full scope. This is not a matter of

sobriety; expression, Pope says, ought to be the dress of thought; nothing is more dangerous than false eloquence; where the foliage of words abounds, the fruits of sense are scarce. Such is the doctrine; an inward necessity, however, tends to lead practice further and further away from it.

Classical poetry, viewed as a whole, is rational in its inspiration. The themes it treats are, therefore, most often of an

abstract nature; or at least, the development which i
them inclines to abstraction. For the choice of the
the quality of the style, are determined by a deep pre
of the mind. Creative imagination, so to say, shov
an intellectual trend. The abstract style is not only
it answers a need.

Now, this inner cause which produces it brings al
the same time other connected effects. Abstractio
essence philosophic and general; it has the dignity c
rises above the particular; it is invested with the no
of universal affirmations. To think, feel, and write
plane of 'reason,' is to legislate, even in verse, and
humblest of subjects, for the men of all countries an
ages. Besides, this nobleness does correspond with t
sciousness which a writer has of his mission; classica
a priesthood, by virtue of which the modern mind c
through deliberate imitation, to the august
literature. And as the very character of antiquity
falsely conceived, warped into an ever self-conscious
ness, with a fondness for majesty, there radiates fr
classical ideal, in so far as the ancients are the ob
its veneration, a constant resolve to maintain an u
standard of nobleness.

In what can this nobleness reside? No doubt, in t
jects chosen, first of all; these will often be philosophi
general. But noble subjects call necessarily for nob
guage, and it is through language that their dignity
itself felt. On the other hand, some themes must ine
be familiar and simple; but here intervenes still anothe
of the classical ideal. Stress is not placed upon the ori
of the idea, but upon the value of the form. The mat
be familiar, even trite, provided the manner rejuven
This means that the expression ought to offer a ch
guarded and correct, and on the other hand forcib
striking, without which a time-worn thought will not
to command attention. The search for verbal in
within the limits imposed by severe and correct taste
other source of the systematic dignity of this poetry.
it is that the frigidness of an inspiration born of reaso
to clothe itself in an abstract language, that is to s
in a general language, and one which seeks its energy
nobleness of its terms.

to simplicity. Classical poetry, therefore, refuses on principle to be nurtured upon the expressive force of concrete, familiar terms, which savour of the freshness of life itself. While society is becoming more deeply permeated with middle-class influence, an aristocratic purism takes possession of literature; art aims at distinction, and turns away with instinctive repugnance from what is low. Periphrasis, most often, springs from no other cause. It is by thus losing touch with nature a
meaning and in an
the language of pc
sources of living expression. In order to re-establish this indispensable correspondence, a vigorous effort will be required, such as
to make, and (

But that is .
century, over and above this diffuse and widespread quality, becomes concentrated in stereotyped expressions which are transmitted from poet to poet. The language of poetry thus becomes conventional, in that it no longer answers to a choice, to a verbal creation, but to a mechanical art, to passive devices. The cause must be sought in the doctrine of imitation now set up as a principle, in the constitution of an official taste, and of a hierarchy of literary works; in the influence both of the ancients, whom modern after modern proposes to follow, and of the models established by the new writers. To this fund of ready-made elegance in diction contribute Latinisms, and frequently Hellenisms, both of vocabulary and of syntax; and also the terms which have passed into circulation from the poetry of the Renascence, with a meaning that most often was then precise, close to concrete truth, and which frequent use, gradually removing them from their primitive value, transforms into purely arbitrary signs, whose present dignity is made up of their very vagueness, of their association with the work of writers whom time has consecrated. The history of such words as 'swain,' or 'steed,' or 'dale,' and of their progressive entry into the conventional vocabulary of poetry, allows one to grasp the very general fact of this change.

Lastly, and especially, one must look for the cause of that mechanism in the withering-up of living inspiration, the substitution of literary motives for spontaneous impulses, and the tendency towards verbalism which results from it. 'Poetic

diction' only takes on its special colouring from the time when it is severed from all direct or immediate relationship with the life of a thought, be it a rational life. It is characterized not only by generality, or by abstraction and nobleness, but also by death.

The store of cut-and-dried language which is thus created, with its unchanging epithets, its inseparable associations of terms, its stereotyped expressions, its periphrases, would therefore not have triumphed over the the vital instinct which guides poetry towards the coining of new forms, had it not been demanded by the deep nature of the inspiration itself. But in so far as classicism implies an artistic desire, its conscious effort does encourage this degeneration of style. For the best writers of the Restoration had extolled the search after elegant, brilliant phrases, after the pattern of the 'felicities of expression' of the ancients. These 'turns,' recommended by Dryden (*Discourse on Satire*), were, for the minds that had been nourished in the best school of letters, to take the place of the quips, the 'conceits' of preciosity, from which the seventeenth century in its closing years sought to free itself. As mechanism was little by little replacing life, and choice was stiffening into mere docility, the 'turns' themselves in the end gave rise to stock forms of expression. And thus obscurely, the remains of preciosity, the spirit of verbal affectation, which classicism had not been able to destroy completely, contributed to the formation of this set of epithets, phrases, and terms, which from the time of Pope, and especially after his day, overloaded poetry with a stereotyped and intolerable elegance. Poetic diction is already perceptible in the Pope of *Windsor Forest*, to whom shepherds are decidedly 'swains,' fish 'the scaly breed,' the sea 'the watery plains'—developed, and yet vague formulae, in which most often the concrete quality of the object, abstracted and therefore impaired, is rendered by a derived adjective, and referred to a neutral term, which suggests the fundamental identity of substances to the reasoning mind. This diction is more marked with the Pope of the *Iliad*; it develops with Gay (above all in the *Fables*). Swift, whose rough sincerity sees through all growing affectations, is almost immune from it, and even jeers at it on occasion (*Ode on Science, A Love Song in the Modern Taste*, etc.).

9. *The Exceptional Note in Poetry: Tickell, Parnell, Allan Ramsay, etc.*—Even at the heart of classicism, however, and

with the poets who remain most faithful to its ideal, there are *elements that refuse to be reduced to it. The early years of*

unexpected freshness.

These are for the most part third-rate poets, whose temper-

fection, they will occasionally avoid it with unconscious felicity.

Tickell,[1] in the rest of his work, is an imitator, and indeed better than a mere follower. But his elegy *To the Earl of Warwick, on the Death of Mr. Addison*, is a justly famous poem, sincere in its emotion, which does not dare to be simple, and invests itself in pompous phraseology, but elevates it with the ardour of inspiration; and the music of his sentiment has here found for its suggestion a rhythm which is truly funereal,

remembered by some facile, regular lines, and *The Hermit*, a poem very much admired in the eighteenth century, but

very consciously puerile, but which convey something of the charm of childhood, and with their rhythm know how to recall the Milton of *L'Allegro*. And the softness of his pastorals relaxes and lightens the language of classicism into a rather pleasant fluidity.

But it is with Allan Ramsay,[1] the Scottish poet, that classicism, without abjuring itself in any way, offers the most composite character. His *Gentle Shepherd* is a curious mixture of literary convention and rural realism, in which the conventional note is still dominant. At least there is in this poem the instinct of what native genius and popular poetry will one day be able to produce. The language is made up of English poetic diction, seasoned with Scottish dialect; the verse retains the regular run of the couplet, diversified with the free rhythm of songs. The whole, despite much artificiality, has freshness, character, and that shrewd humour which lends to the very solemnity of the classical tone an air of semi-consciousness, and almost of irony.

To be consulted: R. P. Bond, *English Burlesque Poetry, 1700–50*, 1932; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. ix, Chaps. III and VI; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. v, 1905; Dennis, *The Age of Pope*, 1906; Doughty, *English Lyric in the Age of Reason*, 1922; R. D. Havens, *The Influence of Milton on English Poetry*, 1922; Johnson, *Lives of the Poets*, 1781; ed. by Hill, 1906; Neilson, *Essentials of Poetry*, 1912; Th. Quayle, *Poetic Diction; a Study of Eighteenth Century Verse*, 1924; A. L. Reed, *The Background of Gray's Elegy*, 1924; Saintsbury, *History of Criticism*, vol. ii, 1902; *History of English Prosody*, vol. ii, 1908; Spence, *Anecdotes, etc.*, ed. by Singer, 1858; Ward, *The English Poets*, vol. iii, 1884; Joseph Warton, *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, 1756–82; F. T. Wood, *An Anthology of Augustan Poetry, 1700–51*, 1931.

[1] Allan Ramsay, 1686–1758, was the most brilliant representative of a revival in Scottish literature, which took place under the influence of national inspiration. *The Gentle Shepherd*, 1725; *The Tea-Table Miscellany*, 1724–32. *Works*, 2 vols., 1877. See B. Martin, *Allan Ramsay, a Study of his Life and Works*, 1932.

CHAPTER III

THE SPIRIT OF CONTROVERSY

1. *Critical Thought and Prose.*—The age of classicism
oadens and intensifies the practice of free rational inquiry,

any rhythmic expression, the art of writing in verse is led to
t up for itself as an end the search for adequate form, and

perceptible change. With the latter, the care of the form
no longer paramount, or is no longer reinforced by the

at they have not been sought after; they spring from the
apidity, the finesse, the vigour with which the energy of
telligence makes itself felt.

Only with some writers of this time has prose a character

r. On the contrary, it is without desiring to be so, at least
rectly, that Swift is one of the great masters of English
ose. His main object was to be a polemist. His supremely
nical work must be viewed in the atmosphere of the

controversies where philosophy, religion, politics, and science wage unceasing war, carried away as they are by the inner enthusiasm of dogmatic or, more frequently, critical affirmation.

2. *The Deistic Quarrel: Joseph Butler.*—The opening years of the eighteenth century are astir with religious controversies. Reason growing bolder sets to work upon the obscure parts of religion, and wants to shed upon them the rays of a natural light. Such an enterprise appears destructive to the essential beliefs of Christianity, and apologists rise up in their defence. On either side, the arguments are of a similar order; they appeal to the sole authority of reason. After varying fortunes, the victory seems to rest with the champions of orthodoxy. But they have wounded themselves with the very weapons they employed; a long and bitter struggle leaves the public mind uncertain and weary, and inclining towards indifference or scepticism.

The men who submit to a purely human test the nucleus of revelation which the Reformation had preserved, prolong the line of critical thought which had been traced out by Protestantism in the sixteenth century. But in the seventeenth they have more direct predecessors. Lord Herbert of Cherbury had found in internal evidence the data which sufficed for a philosophical creed. At a later date, Locke demonstrated the 'reasonableness' of Christianity (1695), while Charles Blount (*Anima Mundi*, 1679) had giver systematic form of the thesis of a religion according to natu The deep-seated need for rationality which is the characte tic feature of this age was to emphasize the latent confli between revealed dogma and the demands of intellectu judgment; whilst the rivalries of sects, and their mutual pe secutions, by weakening the prestige of the churches, drov the freest minds to inquire after a lay form of belief.

The Deists of the classical age, with some timidity at first then with aggressive daring, carry these tendencies to the necessary conclusion. They are looked upon by their contemporaries, whose feelings they have shocked, as impious infidels. At the present day, the perspective of time enables us to understand them better. Theirs, on the whole, were temperaments keenly desirous of a truth that was rational, of sincerity, more than of a useful, passive conformity, or of humbleness. Their attempt to join up the domain of reason with that of faith points to the effort by which Locke had established their equivalence. If religion conforms entirely

[illegible]

thus endangered; and the Establishment, the clergy and the hierarchy, become quite human and arbitrary institutions. It is no wonder, therefore, that Deism, despite the very positive character which it did not want to relinquish, should have been denounced almost universally as a doctrine of negation pure and simple.

The series of its outstanding works opens with the *Christianity not Mysterious* of Toland[1] (1696), which deduces from the idea itself of revelation the necessity for an intelligible belief, and makes no distinction between faith and clear cognition. A Catholic by birth, Toland evolves towards Protestant liberalism, then towards the Anglican Church, and finally towards an independent pantheism. The *Discourse of Free Thinking* of Collins (1713) draws from the principle of rational liberty, which the latitudinarian theologians had accepted without reserve, consequences which were destructive with regard to the authority of the clergy The *Discourses on the Miracles of our Saviour* by Woolston (1727) are animated by a spirit of ironic hostility against priests, the jealous custodians of tradition; he assails the official version of the miracles in the New Testament, where he believes that he can make out improbable or absurd elements, and concludes in favour of the wholly symbolical and spiritual character of the Sacred Book, which, he declares, should strengthen the prestige of a reasonable religion. The work of Tindal (*Christianity as Old as the Creation*, 1730) draws the general conclusions resulting from the application of reason alone to religious problems. He starts from the very formulae of contemporary theology, which affirmed the accord between faith by revelation and natural faith, and from it deduces the superfluousness of the first, or at least, submits it entirely to the control of the second. Finally, Peter Annet, in *The* [illegible] *Moral Philosopher* (1744), [illegible] in one of the vital [illegible]

Such theses roused the ire of many, and called forth a great [illegible]

Religious Deist (1737-41) belabours at great length a thesis which for the needs of the cause at issue he treats as a strong point of his adversaries.

culminating point with
to the whole century a
nst the threats of criti-
cism; he has awed doubt, and comforted faith; and in the

takes up again the favourite argument of the adversaries of revelation; it discovers in reality a scheme of natural religion; but it also finds in it an imperious invitation to go beyond the latter, and rise to the full belief of the Christian. The point of departure is thus the analysis of the data of human experience.

The life of man, when properly tested, reveals its own insufficiency; it necessarily implies a system of ends, logical but concealed from our understanding, where our earthly destiny is inserted between two mysteries, upon which revelation projects the only possible light. The mainspring of this reasoning lies in analogy, that is to say in the instinctive

enlightened view of our interest; it produces faith, according to this rule of the mind that an extremely strong probability is equivalent to a certitude. Thus this doctrine, which, at times, makes us think of Pascal, recalls rather the argument of the wager than the thesis of knowledge by way of the heart; utilitarian and relativist, it is already set in the direc-

the silent and scarcely conscious inductions by which are determined the tacit inferences of our thought. It analyses nature in a mood that wishes to be objective; it probes it, without showing it the secret complacency of the Deist; it

perceives the character of things with a sober lucidity that inclines to pessimism. It has therefore exercised a deep and durable influence. But while it is relatively realistic for its century, it is no longer sufficiently so for ours. To-day, its postulates are immediately visible. The science of nature and that of man have come to be seen in a new light. To us the universe appears infinitely more complex than when Butler viewed it; and the lesson of a kind of implicit Christianity has ceased to emanate from it for those who are uninitiated; indeed it was not there, save on condition of having been first of all put there. Belief, just as incredulity, invokes other arguments to-day. Butler's system remains one of the most vigorous products of English thought in the eighteenth century; through its quiet anthropomorphism, its full confidence in reason, which empiricism limits but does not weaken, through the assurance with which it metes out its share to mystery, and deciphers the plan of existence as if it were some familiar and simple text, it fitly represents a time when it seemed to be the extremity of modest caution to accept the view that the beyond was not completely intelligible.

3. *Political Thought: Bolingbroke, Mandeville.*—Bolingbroke[1] is in secret or avowed sympathy with Deism; he it is who furnished Pope with the outlines of the religious philosophy laid down in the *Essay on Man*, which did not fail to awaken much uneasiness on the side of orthodoxy. His posthumous essays reveal an attitude of intellectual irony with regard to the superstitions with which, he hints, primitive religion based upon nature had saddled itself throughout the centuries. Though this disrespect is aimed, for the most part, at paganism, or at Roman Catholic rites, yet a set purpose of free-thinking as to the historical elements of Christian-

[1] Henry Saint-John, born in 1678, of ancient family, was by birth destined for a public career; he shared with Harley the leadership of the Tory Government in 1710, and in 1712 was created Viscount Bolingbroke; the death of Queen Anne in 1714 interrupted his plans for a Jacobite restoration and caused him to flee to France where he was attached as secretary to the Pretender. Allowed to return to England in 1723, he was excluded from the Lords, and bitterly opposed the Whig minister, Walpole. After a further residence of seven years in France (1735–42), he resigned himself to the complete failure of his political hopes, and died in 1751. His works were published by Mallet and comprise *Letters on the Study and Use of History*, 1736; *A letter on the Spirit of Patriotism*, 1736; *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 1738; and letters or treatises such as *Remarks upon the History of England*, and *A Dissertation upon Parties*, published in the *Craftsman*, the organ of the opposition to Walpole from 1727 to 1731. See Churton Collins, *Bolingbroke*, 1886; W. Sichel, *Bolingbroke and his Times*, 1901–2; Hassall, *Life of Bolingbroke*, 1915; Butler, *The Tory Tradition*, 1914; P. Baratier, *Lord Bolingbroke, ses écrits politiques*, 1939.

ity is ill disguised. F
an historian, a mor

politics that his thought has attempted a personal synthesis. *Of a clear, alert, even a realistic mind, he understood that the* weakness of the parliamentary system, more obvious every

progress. To what extent
constituted sincere? It se
feelings into it, at the sam
political fortune. He shows up in a very strong light the excesses of party rivalry, chases away like idle phantoms the antiquated jealousy of a royal absolutism from henceforth doomed; evokes the principles of the Revolution of 1688, and claims to apply them better than the corrupt administration openly practised by Walpole; urging all good citizens to be reconciled, he singles out the national idea as the means to unify
unanir
subjec
symbol of the fatherland.

kind of unconscious cynicism from the way he handles these

civilization, is a vain Utopia. In a republic of merchants, all compete to rob and cheat their neighbours more; the egoism of each will become the happiness of all, provided a wise government harmonizes and reconciles all these blind forces by limiting them one by another. Similarly, ethics are purely conventional. Each person, by nature, thinks only of himself. But society requires altruism; it produces it, cultivates it, by rewarding it with praises and honours; and men, vainglorious dupes, do through pride what their instinct urges them not to do.

Such is, at least, the active thought of Mandeville, and that which radiates imperiously from his work. On the surface,

motives of human conduct.

Although thus veiled by transparent reserves, these analyses reveal a robust mind, firmly resolved to shake off the universal authority of fictitious values; rough, and rather indelicate, overstepping the correct limits, unmindful of fine shades; but sound, and animated by a scientific will. What would its

In the political order of things, it seems as it were an anticipatory outline, traced by an *enfant terrible*, of the system of the liberal economists In the moral order, it is in intimate agreement with the corrosive intuitions of Swift. It appears in a sense to prelude the denunciations of Rousseau, to show up the inward rottenness of the industrial civilization which is in course of development; but while Mandeville actually places the happiness that is least imperfect in a poor, frugal, and limited society, he labours under no illusion as to the appeal of such an ideal, and does not propose seriously to

precursor, and his anarchism remains implicit. As a political theorist, he gives us a lesson of intellectual liberty, and throws new light upon the complexity of social facts; as a psychologist and moralist, he belongs, except in the matter of literary talent, to the line of Machiavelli and Nietzsche.

4. *Erudition and Literary Criticism.*—On that intellectual battlefield, the classical age, a war of learning and literary scholarship is also waged. Bentley [1] and Dennis dominate a numerous group of humanists and critics by the vigour of their faculty of arguing, not less than by their knowledge or their doctrine.

The quarrels of the scholars touch too closely upon the origins of faith, not to be interwoven with religious discussions; Bentley is an upholder of orthodoxy; he refutes atheism, and violently attacks the deist, Collins. But it is against other adversaries that he carries out his finest campaigns. To a minute knowledge of ancient texts, he joins an instinctive sense of method, a strong critical shrewdness, and above all the gift of divining the truth. Once he has formed his conclusions, he defends them with extraordinary force, in a style that is compact, cogent, and at the same time racy, capable of irony, concrete vigour, and eloquence. Though he claims—as one might expect—to be the most pacific of men, the joy of fighting, the intoxication of a victory foreseen, expected, and enjoyed, cast a glow over the five hundred pages of his *Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris.* There is something about Bentley that is better than the literary erudite, or the controversialist; he is already a modern savant. He explains literature and philology by means of linguistics; he makes, or opens the way for, many a discovery by turning to Greek dialects, metrics, and monuments. Nothing is wanting to this mind, save a certain detachment, the salutary liberation from oneself, the fine perception of superior artistic fitness. Thus we see his dogmatism and personal sentiment in the end crushing out his critical pru-

[1] Richard Bentley, born in 1662, in Yorkshire, studied at Cambridge; then was appointed tutor to the Stillingfleet family, becoming a man of vast learning. After several years at Oxford, he became royal librarian in 1694, and in 1700 was elected to the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge. His long life, fully devoted to work and controversy, maps itself out according to his treatises, sermons, commentaries, editorial contributions, letters, replies, etc., particularly: *Epistola ad Joannem Millium*, 1691; *A Confutation of Atheism*, 1692–1713; *A Dissertation upon the Epistles of Phalaris*, 1699; edition of Horace, 1711; *Remarks upon a Late Discourse of Free-thinking* (by Collins), 1713; Milton's *Paradise Lost*, a new edition, 1732. *Works*, ed. by A. Dyce, 1838. See Jebb, *Bentley* (English Men of Letters), 1902.

to expect. In *Phalaris* are not by Sir William ancients (1690); and thus makes it possible for Swift to castigate, as having contemned them, the very man of his time who knew them best (*The Battle of the Books*).

In principle, Dennis[1] is for the ancients; Shakespeare, he holds, is inferior to them despite his great merits, because he

Very self-willed, his mind has firmness, and his abusive vio-

theory of art, which is rooted in English instincts. He inveighs against Italian opera in the name of the dignity and seriousness of the stage, and assigns to the poet the duty of instructor and reformer. At the very heart of classicism, an ideal coloured with morality comes to free and define itself, opening up one of the avenues by which sentiment will steal into the stronghold.

5. *The Criticism of Manners: Satire, Comedy, Memoirs* — The spirit of satire is present everywhere in the classical age; it forms by itself, or when allied with other elements, the inspiration of a great part of the poetry; the work of Pope is full of it. But outside of Pope, the formal satire in verse

[1] ... travelled in France and Italy, wrote for the stage

declines, and tends to become artificial; it will revive, however, under the influence of political motives, in the middle of the century. The satires of Young (*The Universal Passion*, 1725–1728) are very estimable declamations; those of the young Smollett (*Advice*, 1746; *Reproof*, 1747) will prove to be merely the exercises of a schoolboy. The rational criticism of manners is being diffused into manifold literary expressions, and the prose of comedy, of the novel, of letters and memoirs, as that of sermons and pamphlets, furnishes it with a more supple instrument.

Generally speaking, the theatre of the classical age does not belong to the central current of literature; it reveals rather the divergent or complementary aspects of the epoch; the comedy of Colley Cibber or Steele, the drama of Rowe, have their place in the study of middle-class inspiration, or of the dawn of sentimentalism. An exception must be made for the correct tragedy in which Addison, more mindful on this occasion of the rules than of his moralizing ideal, gave the most finished imitation of the French model (*Cato*, 1713). In fact, the influence of the French dramatists continues to be felt throughout the reign of Queen Anne; the adaptations of Racine and Corneille are numerous; and Ambrose Philips's *Distrest Mother*, 1712 (*Andromaque*), is only the most famous. However, the actual life of the dramatic art is to be found elsewhere.

Again it is not to be found in the expiring tradition of the Restoration. No doubt the licentiousness of the stage is not put to flight by the clarion call of Collier; indeed, it disappears only very gradually; the comedies of Mrs. Centlivre[1] show skill and movement, but vainly attempt to conceal an extremely crude frankness of tone beneath a final repentance of the wrongdoers. It is the change in society, in manners and in taste, that is shifting dramatic interest on to new subjects; and the old themes are visibly becoming exhausted.

If one had to look in the theatre for a brilliant comedy that voiced very well the tone of classical literature, it would be *The Beggar's Opera*.[2] The spirit of parody is the very soul of the play; it is the facile sentimentalism of many contemporary pieces that Gay's biting and ironical talent is here assailing. But the scope of the parody is wider; it is heightened by a political and moral satire, and even—in no very serious

[1] 1680–1722; *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, 1717.
[2] By Gay (1728). See above, Chap. II, sect. 7.

intention—by a kind of deliberate reversing of values, symbolized by the confusing of the planes to which art is accustomed, that recalls Mandeville and Swift.

Similarly, the memoirs of the time, a fertile literary kind, reveal the intensity of the group and party spirit, and of society life. The savour of scandal which Mrs. Manley knows how to give to her transparent fictions (*New Atalantis*, 1709), is fairly closely allied to the attraction which urges a Lord Hervey [1] to write. The dominant tone, in this latter work,

ments which are intellectual, free, and critical. She is not exempt from some dryness, and even from a dash of cynicism.

variety of interests. Despite the ease of her style, her correspondence, which she revised and which in every way is steeped in literary intentions, cannot be compared, as she hoped it would be, with that of Madame de Sévigné. She revealed the Turkish Orient to the general English public; and her friendships, her enmities, her famous quarrel with Pope, who was her admirer before he assailed her with biting irony, all give a rich documentary value to the story of her life.

The vein of satiric description, closely allied to that of parody, which runs at the very heart of the classical age, crops out again in a whole literature of burlesque, where artistic and

scholarly inspiration rejoins popular realism. Bel *Dunciad* of Pope, *The Beggar's Opera* of Gay, the (*Travels* of Swift, and beside *The Splendid Shilling* Philips, one must not forget the *Hudibras Redivivus* Ward (1708), in short lines after the style of Butler, *Amusements Serious and Comical* of Tom Brown The eighteenth century opens, as the seventeenth hac with an exuberance of criticism and mockery, where ıf thought seems to be practised in a mood of self- lisplay.

6. *Universal Criticism: Arbuthnot, Swift.*—Cont ›egets controversy; it also produces scepticism. .tmosphere of party strife and of the clashing of id .verage mind is drifting towards the lassitude, th ndifference which will mark the mid-years of the c Vith vigorous thinkers, who give themselves up wl heir beliefs, and ardently live through their inte .dventures, doubt cannot be superficial and easy t he universal irony with which they envelop themselv vhich seems to dissolve all the disappointments of h ›rain into a mere play of the critical intellect, disgui ll the inward torment born of a moral restlessness nust not, in all probability, lay too much stress (noral kinship between Swift and the Romanticists, wh nclined to recognize in him one of themselves. But o see in him, along with the triumph of the rational l with which classicism wanted to light up the correct of life and art, the symptom of the inner uneasiness a reason too well armed for destruction could not e while it only met on every side with rival negations.

Arbuthnot [2] is inseparable from Swift. He was his and lived in mental companionship with him; from the to which they both belonged there issued works united

[1] Tom Brown's *Amusements* and Ned Ward's *London Spy* have l edited by A. L. Hayward, 1927.

[2] John Arbuthnot, born in Scotland (1667), taught mathematics in I then practised medicine; attached to the person of Queen Anne (17 played an important part under the Whig ministry (1710–14) and in 171 numerous pamphlets: *The Art of Political Lying*, *The History of John B* In 1713 he formed with Pope the Scriblerus Club, which produced the *M of Scriblerus* (published in 1741). After the death of the queen and of his party (1714), he retired into private life, but continued to collab the literature of the opposition, in a way that still remains obscure. He 1735. His *Miscellaneous Works* (1750) are only partly authentic. *The of John Bull*, Cassell's National Library; ed. by H. Teerink ...
The Life and Works of ...

affinity of inspiration, and many a hint which others knew how to put to profit. A supple, alert, original, seed-sowing intelligence, he has influenced Swift to a greater degree than he has been influenced by him. Of ...

to *Martinus Scriblerus*, a general theme, no doubt of collective origin, but the most direct development of which seems to be due to Arbuthnot. As for the echoes and variations of this theme in the literature of the day, there still subsists about them a great deal of uncertainty.

One thing is clear, and that is the frame of mind to which these diverse works give expression. Keen and critical thinkers, instinct with the intellectual craving for realities, find themselves in contact with one another, mixed up with the politics of an age when all the devices of government are laid bare, when power is transferred to parties, when opinion, officially in the ascendant, is subjected to all the caprices

are summoned wretched poets, false savants, quack doctors, pretentious scholars, humanists puffed up with bookish learning. A sort of general revision of science and art is instituted; and this universal criticism, so bold that it dares assail the superstitious obsession of ancient literatures, takes up again the charges of *Hudibras* against an obstinate scholasticism that will not die.

Like Butler's satire, *Martinus Scriblerus* exaggerates the whims, the oddities, the wrongs of pedantic ignoramuses, overlooking the soul of healthy curiosity that is often to be found in them; above all, it obstinately attacks adversaries who have been conquered time after time, and it pursues them under their already obsolete forms rather than under the new forms with which they manage to invest themselves. In this excellent fancy, there is a somewhat forced air of

caricature. But the claims of intellect against foolishness are affirmed with a clear, robust, and sovereign good sense.

Arbuthnot has left his mark upon this common fund of doctrine. Through his *John Bull* also, his *Political Lying*, and the pictures of his personality that we find in the works of his friends, he possesses a distinct literary physiognomy. He has the gift of humour, transposes into impassive observation a full and concrete sense of the innumerable absurdities of life; and his sober art, vigorous, often bitter and realistic, recalls the tonality of that of Swift. A doctor, he knows the intimate connections of body and soul, and looks at the caprices of character from a physical point of view; and yet his vision of moral things is direct and profound; his portrait of John Bull has definitively drawn the first outline of this national English type. He has a creative imagination for allegory, and sustains the portraits of his symbolical characters with an accurate sense of the relationship between the sign and the thing signified. With him, experience and reflection have not soured the power of feeling, but have matured it into a humane and tolerant philosophy, the kindly radiation of which was felt by all who came near him. His rationalism is refined into a humility of the intelligence. He is a writer through the firmness, the precision, the incisiveness of his style; and his artistic invention has been fruitful. The figure of Martinus Scriblerus, ridiculous, pitiable, and obscurely appealing, and the episodes of his childhood, are additions to the unforgettable types of human comedy; Sterne remembered them in *Tristram Shandy*, Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*.

Swift [1] is the greatest writer of the classical age by the force

[1] Jonathan Swift, born in Dublin in 1667, came of a family of Yorkshire rigin; lost his father at an early age, studied at Kilkenny and Trinity College, nd was attached as secretary to Sir William Temple, until 1699. Already 1696–7 he had written a great portion of *A Tale of a Tub*, and *The Battle of e Books*, published in 1704. It was at the home of Temple that he met sther Johnson, the future Stella. He took orders, was appointed to the nall living of Laracor in Ireland, but for the most part we find him in London, tively engaged in religious and political controversy. He defended the hts of the Irish clergy, and this led him to desert the Whig party for the er side, shortly before the Tory ministry of 1710. For a period of almost r years Swift, an intimate of Harley, was the influential adviser of the ernment; collaborated in the *Examiner* (1711) and prepared public opinion the peace with France (*The Conduct of the Allies, etc.*) Appointed Dean t. Patrick's (Dublin) in 1713, he retired to Ireland on the fall of the Tories, ther he was followed by Hester Vanhomrigh (Vanessa), whom he had vn in London; the false position of Swift between the two women who d him, and of whom (it is possible, but improbable) he may have married one la), was relieved by the death of Vanessa; that of Stella, in 1728, came as

of his genius; the concern for art and the care of form are not in his case the essential motive of creation. His work owes an exceptionally broad scope to the freedom and penetration of its thought. He carries the rational criticism of values to a point where it menaces and impairs the very reasons for living.

Attain-

e normal,

, repressed

voices of sensibility and instinct, which reality in its baseness and cruelty afflicts with many wounds, supply the subdued accompaniment of soul-stirring chords to the clear accents of the intellect. And just as the language of Swift has this

the latent powers of a virtual Romanticism; and further still, the audaciously humble solutions of the most modern wisdom.

It is permissible to think that these attenuations of the spirit of criticism, these voluntary sacrifices to good sense, are not the most original part of Swift's work. His practical adhesion to moral or social beliefs which his merciless perspicacity saw through and through is to all appearances a sincere act, and one which no logical need can lead us not to respect. But he has not explained the submission of his

destiny always seemed to baffle his desires; it was with the bitterness of a long series of disappointments that he withdrew from court intrigues His great works, those in which

himself would like to set up. In the preface which he wrote for this work, Swift is indignant that he should be classed among the Deists by superficial readers. To us of to-day, the error appears very natural. To point out shades and

the flesh of man groans and faints.

And not only are all religious organizations built up on half-conscious acts of cowardice, and the surrender of the

with the turbid fermentations of animality. The *Discourse concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* no doubt admits, in passing, that prophetic inspiration can be an immediate gift from the Godhead; but everything encourages the conjecture that this is a purely formal reserve; for an over-zealous spirit in religion, from the orgies of the ancients to the frenzies of the moderns, is traced back with too mercilessly sharp an analysis, too keen an intuition of the deeper link between certain spiritual raptures and erotic moods, to

sound, even if bitter truth, there is mingled in it the keen and secret joy of a moral revenge, the protest of a free mind against conventional lies, even should these lies be sacred.

But the works of reason are treated with no better respect.

The Battle of the Books is fired by an anger still aimed at a special object—at certain forms of intellectual ambition and error. Pedantry, false erudition, rabid controversy, are connected with the thesis of the 'moderns,' the insolent, mean enemies of the glory of the ancients; the despiser of Phalaris, Bentley—who yet was not wrong—is overwhelmed with classical contumely; the verve of this pamphlet, full as it is of allusions to the images and devices of the epic, is another example of the fecundity at this epoch of the mock-heroic theme. *Gulliver's Travels* singularly broadens the indictment of the very effort by which the human mind claims to know and to understand. Philosophy appears in the light of an ambitious jargon; metaphysics, of a mystification; while theory, that sterile activity, shackles the efficient play of practice in all domains and in a hundred and one different ways. This satiric realism is given free scope in the painting of the illusory kingdom of Laputa. The fever of financial speculation, of rational inquiry, and, already, of mechanical progress, which the society of that day freely shows, is presented as the agitated ardour of over-heated brains, in which are unceasingly hatched all manner of 'projects' and inventions, preposterous chimeras.

Swift does not seem to put any trust in science, either in its present or in its future; he derides equally the erudite inferences of Bentley, and Newton's theory of gravitation; these hypotheses, he holds, are the playthings of thought; fashion upholds them, and then they pass away. Like Samuel Butler, he joylessly witnesses, in the first flush of the modern age, the awakening of the mental unrest which will produce the scientific conquest of the world; his attention, turned towards the past, is above all aware of the innumerable failures of scholastic charlatanry. The moderns, according to him, have added nothing which really matters to the sound reasoning of the ancients. His rational criticism of knowledge has no positive counterpart; it tends to scepticism.

It is less surprising to find only shadows in the image which Swift paints of political institutions and manners. His experience had revealed to him the hidden springs of power, the part played by corruption and intrigue. He writes on the opposition side, under the despised administration of Walpole. Elsewhere, in his didactic treatises, he shows himself alive to the necessity for a strong authority, sustained by the prestige of religion, and in its turn sustaining the spiritual hierarchy.

words, through which kings retain their thrones and magistrates their offices; and from one end of society to the other

it, the courts and courtiers, the debating assemblies, the

in order to vary the perspective by reversing the scale of his transposition, Swift carries us from the country of the dwarfs to that of the giants; in the former, everything was the grotesque and despicable parody of that human reality which convention invests with an august prestige; in the latter, it is our reality which reveals itself, directly, as ridiculous and infinitely small. But Brobdingnag and its patriarchal manners are not an ideal seriously proposed to man; this fancy vanishes as soon as one grasps its thin texture; it is only invented to show us better our littleness, to crush us under a sense of our miseries. Whatever the standard chosen for the comparison, mankind cuts a sorry and ugly figure.

The reason is that it is in itself vile and corrupt. In order to realize ever so little the idea of a noble existence, Swift has it that one must forsake the human species. Animal life will supply us with the figures of reasonable beings. In the land of the philosophical horses, we at last come upon something that in the countries known to us we have looked for in vain When explained to these wise quadrupeds, our civilization is not intelligible to them; for our perversity surpasses all understanding. And in the lower depths of their civilized society, the ignoble race of two-footed monsters drags itself along; let us look at it without prejudice, and we shall recognize ourselves. What we call bestiality is the very attribute of man With relentless cruelty, Swift drives our thought back towards the sordidness of physical existence. Here is an instinctive trend of his attention, almost an obsession of his fancy, of which his poems, like his great allegories, bear the traces, and which has been often connected with the morbid

[illegible] e time in which he is [illegible] *1710* to *1714*, Swift [illegible] The *Journal to Stella*, a collection of letters in which he jots down familiarly the story of his life for the girl to whom he is attached by an affection that has remained rather mysterious, is one of the most taking documents of its kind; an effusion in which one catches the note of a strange temperament, somewhat ailing; but a note full of playfulness and tender puerilities. Whether it be the bustle of public affairs, or sentiment, which then occupies Swift more, something is lifting him above that fund of aggressive reflection to which *A Tale of a Tub* already bore witness.

Ireland also saved him at moments from this gnawing disquietude of mind. Deeply moved by the miserable lot of the [illegible] the English by refusing to buy the products of their manufacture. In 1724, he publishes a series of *Letters* (signed 'M. B. Drapier') against the new copper currency which an Englishman had obtained the privilege of coining, and the weight of which did not correspond with its official value. With an admirable divination of the popular mind, he there wrote a language full of such simple and just sense, and roused so cleverly the mistrust of the practical instinct, that the Government had perforce to yield before a general protest. On this occasion, Swift was the accepted mouthpiece of a people; and he always remained proud of it.

In many subjects, his fertile talent as a polemist was able [illegible] with clearness and coolness the ideas of a lively and [illegible]

interest here lies in the discovery of these forms, in the a
the mind which chooses them, which loads them with a m
ing prodigiously rich and insulting. The apologues on w
are founded *A Tale of a Tub* or *The Battle of the Books*
nothing original about them; *Gulliver's Travels* is first c
a novel of adventure and a tale of wonder, and as such
no more value than many others; the sources utilized by S
have been discovered or are suspected; in this domain he
a long series of predecessors. But the working out of t
data is with him incomparable. The verve, the ingenuity
concrete invention, which embroider these general themes
uninterrupted variations, give to the least detail a restra
and irresistible eloquence, and store it with a world of allusi
which also render the supernatural acceptable and nor
such are the elements of an art which Swift carries to
highest degree. And these elements themselves are deri
their common source is a passionate analysis which, wit
indefatigable effort, scrutinizes reality, at the same tim
it judges and condemns it with a harsh and angry fee
The figured representations among which Swift's satire m
are like an embittered poetry, the value of which lies le
its form than in the philosophic meaning through whic
develops and achieves itself.

An art of implicit expression, contained as to its meth
expansive as to its results, is by its main device closely ak
humour. It has usually been the custom to treat Swift
master of irony, because his mockery has not the kindly a
taste which would appear to be, according to some judges
distinctive note of the humorist. But while his effects
very often more in the nature of irony—which depicts
ideal, and pretends to believe that it is real—they are also
often enlivened by humour—which depicts the real, and
tends to believe that it is ideal. The working of transposi
which is common to them, brings these two literary k
very close together, and their boundaries are shifting. S
likes to hover playfully over these limits, and to pass from
domain to the other. He is no less a master in one tha
the other. He handles humour in a superior manner bec
being keenly alive to all the virtual value of the concrete, t
the reactions which the real sets up in our emotion or in
intelligence, he knows how to evoke it in all its crude f
to allow these reactions their widest play, and to efface hi

eloquence with his impassibility. The best-known piece—the practical, commercial proposal to utilize the flesh of Irish children as butcher's meat—has all the precision of an estimate and the calm of a financial statement.

Thus it is that Swift's style conveys the impression of a tense energy, but one which commands and directs itself. A morbid element may have been found in his thought; his personality is a problem which has not as yet, perhaps, revealed the whole of its secret; it certainly contains both grief and instability, a deep trouble which finally led to madness. But this anguish and this unrest are dominated by the force of an extraordinarily lucid intellect, of a will that knows how to govern passion even when it delivers itself up to it. Upon a temperament that possessed all the germs of moral incertitude, and which no doubt, in the following century, would have blossomed out into an ardent Romanticism, Swift builds up a work that is wholly classical in its form. The inner tension reveals itself only in the compactness of the expression, in the number of the intentions, in the restrained violence of some effects. Everything is clear in this style, despite the use made of allusion; it is bathed in an intellectual light; everything in it seems sound, normal, self-controlled. It is only in some familiar effusions, such as the *Journal to Stella*, that we meet with the signs of an oddity in the manner of writing and in [illegible] on itself, of a [illegible] it, and in no way abstract and dry. Swift possesses the concrete world, knows how to utilize it, and here again he is the humorist. [illegible]

[illegible] and straightforward prose. Each word is in its place, quite naturally; the most fitting word is always chosen, without effort, through an instinct that seems spontaneous. A great variety of tone is obtained by means of a supple adaptation of the language to the theme. If one remembers the extent of Swift's work, the ease with which it passes from the most naïve exposition to the pseudo-epic style, from the weightiest discussion to the freest pleasantry, the fact that the parts of

his correspondence which were the most hastily dashed are still astonishingly spirited and immediately, inevita clear, one will the better gauge the greatness of the writer.

To be consulted: *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. ix, Chaps. V, VIII, IX, XIII; vol. x, Chap. XV; Bergson, *Le Rire*, etc., 1900; W. Durham, *Critical Essays of the Eighteenth Century, 1700-25*, 1915; Elton, *Augustan Ages*, 1899; Farrar, *Critical History of Free Thought*, 1862; Hu *Religious Thought in England*, 1892; F. B. Kaye, ed. of Mandeville, *The Fable the Bees*, 1924; Laski, *Political Thought in England from Locke to Bentham*, 192 Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, 1812–15; Paston, *La Mary Wortley Montagu and her Times*, 1907; Pons, *Swift, la Jeunesse*, le Conte *Tonneau*, 1925; De Rémusat, *L'Angleterre au XVIIIe siècle*, 1856; Rigaul *Histoire de la Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, 1859; Robertson, *Shor History of Free Thought*, 1906; Saintsbury, *History of Criticism*, 1902; Sichel *Bolingbroke and his Times*, 1902; Leslie Stephen, *History of E*... *in the Eighteenth Century*, 1902.

spontaneous instincts, have found themselves the natural representatives of the swing towards intelligence in the moral rhythm. But since 1688, the upper middle class is more and more commingling with the hereditary nobility, or rising to a position by its side in the State; and without openly demanding the division of power, it is making its individual influence felt. The middle class as a whole—in the sense in which it stretches down to the common people—is not without sharing in this progress. The centre of social gravity tends to shift in the direction of some human elements, whose formation, modern and urban as it is, may receive, for want of a more exact term, the name of *bourgeois*. Thus a compromise is established, in which the influences of the middle order of the State are every day becoming more active.

The wealthy merchants, the financiers, of Puritan stock, retain something of their former characteristics. They become more cultured, acquire polish, put up with or accept the tone of the superior class, and under the stimulus of social ambition, try to mix with them, as far as this is possible. But they do not think, do not feel in common with them. Their presence even in the most influential circles diffuses a different magnetism throughout the whole of society, encouraging a fondness for piety, simplicity, and sentimental moralism, that for two generations had been repressed by an imperious social and moral reaction. It is in this way that new elements, of a middle-class nature, enter into the psychological and literary atmosphere of the classical age; they bring with them a need for balance and measure, and so seem to lend themselves without effort to the full realization of its standard; but at the same time they sow germs of difference and disintegration, which will develop with time.

What reappears in this way, within a classicism in which the English instinct does not absolutely recognize itself, is a groundwork of tendencies perhaps more characteristic, and more national. Among the phases of the rhythm through which the genius of a people passes there is one which seems to correspond better with the most original elements of its nature. It is that which from then onwards in England begins to revive, and its slow return will fill the eighteenth century. It cannot be said, of course, that Pope as a writer is foreign to his own country. The art of which he is the chief master has been accepted, sought for, demanded by a whole order of civilization, which is, in the progressive develop-

ment of his race, a logical and fully normal stage. But with the humble writings of his contemporary Defoe, with the brilliant essays of Steele and Addison, men of letters like [illegible] with his [illegible] y, some- [illegible] n desires, [illegible] tly satis- fied through them. And the new artistic change which from now is preparing will owe to these desires and to these needs the forces which will assure its triumph. Henceforth, England will gradually and dimly tend to reconstruct the unity of its conscious self round the sentimental, sensitive, and moral suggestions which come to it from these men, middle-class or mediocre by birth, with whom deep spiritual inclinations have suffered less change than with their predecessors through an artificial and acquired culture.

2. *Defoe.*—One would be tempted, at first acquaintance with Defoe,[1] to see in him an average man, drawing his

[1] The life of Daniel Defoe, which is still rather imperfectly known, was so full [illegible]

[illegible] put in the pillory (1703), and imprisoned on several occasions He died in 1731, leaving behind several hundred authentic writings and many [illegible]

strength from the eminent degree in which he represents t mentality of a class. No writer is so definitely, in the doma of literature, the mouthpiece c[illegible] middle cla of his day. But the slightest [illegible] ip the exce tional character of his personality. Enrolled through h instincts in this social category, which he never ceased serve despite his changeful life and political adventures, nevertheless rises above it by virtue of the superiority of prodigious creative vigour.

And yet, the initial impression was not wrong. Of a ve marked individuality, and outstanding as he is through t many-sided nature of his talent, Defoe is not as original as is robust. Leaving aside the immensity of his work, it possible to study it so as to recognize in it the characterist traits of the Puritan shopkeepers and tradesmen, who we then profiting from the influence acquired by the big me chants and financiers. Despite his keen desire to rise in t world, he is more noticeably a commoner than either Addis or Steele; he never received a university education; his inte lectual outlook is wholly modern, and preserves in conta with reality that freshness of perception, that spontaneo way of looking at things, which one connects with minds a practical bent. The new and rather hard light which h been thrown upon Defoe by the discoveries relative to his pa of secret agent and paid informer, does not detract from h physiognomy that quality of full agreement with the figure o class; the moral severity of the religious dissenters did not e clude, as a matter of fact, the most supple adaptations to t demands of utility, nor even on occasion all human failings.

Indeed, his works of so diverse a nature can be group round a few themes or tendencies. In the discussion of mo and social matters, Defoe for the first time lets us hear t actual voice of the average middle class. He expresses wishes, the idea it has of itself and of its place in the State; desire for hierarchy and just subordination, but also liberty. *The Complete English Tradesman* destroys, witho appearing to do so, the literary privilege which the Resto tion had accorded to the circles of the aristocracy; hen forth, the interest of the reading public—however humble a tempered with humour the development may be—can n be granted to subjects inseparably bound up with trad *The Complete English Gentleman* gives definite utterance to t essential claim of the tradesman: to attain to culture, a

through it to integrate himself in the ruling classes; to sweep away the barrier of refinement, the only one that still bars his progress. This is not to say that Defoe dissociates the envied title of 'gentleman' from all material standing; one must have wealth, he holds, when birth is lacking, that one may pretend to it; neither does he demand it for the merchants themselves, in the first generation: their sons and grandsons, when duly educated, will no longer be distinguishable from the descendants of ancient families. Defoe therefore justifies, in principle, what was tending to become a normal reality; the spirit of equality behind his thought is very prudently kept in check. And yet, facts are stronger than all scruples; he has to note the moral corruption of the nobility, and the decline of the ignorant and brutal country gentleman. The future—implicitly—lies with the class that

the useful. It is unwittingly empirical; if it takes consciousness of what it is doing, and formulates it, then it is rationalistic, without any undue care for system; it inclines to scientific objectivity, as to an end that is rarely reached. Defoe is

faithfulness that is not entirely passive, for pure passivity
with that
which car

It is through this faculty of elementary reconstruction, a half-way stage on the road to invention properly speaking that one is inclined to explain to-day the tales which Defoe has borrowed from reality, and by a very discreet art has clothed in an atmosphere of verisimilitude, but after all are
the veracious
describes the
Year works
which visited
strument of
literature; his novels, in their most imaginative episodes, owe to it their extraordinary solidity of contour; but the whole

of his work is full of the rich substance of concrete things. He was daring enough to see the advantages of a modern education, and to claim it for others than the sons of the people; he has grasped the facts of social life, and has described economic reactions: his *Tour through Great Britain* shows an observant, discriminating traveller; his *Augusta Triumphans* is full of the most ingenious suggestions as to the development of societies. For his empiricism advances even to the state of reflective knowledge, and the perception of hidden relations; Defoe not only observes, he analyses, infers, invents.

At the same time, and after the manner of his class, he moralizes. The psychological conditions of individual and social well-being, the sentiments and acts which secure balance and success, these to him are privileged facts, essential among all others; not to recall and show them, would be to lack the first duty of a utilitarianism so spontaneous and inevitable that it cannot be distinguished from good sense. Throughout his long career, and even when his surreptitious doings were not edifying, Defoe's constant desire was to edify. Numerous among his writings are treatises on practical ethics; and in all are instances of his wish to instruct and to warn. *Robinson Crusoe* would be misunderstood, if one did not see in it above all a demonstration of the part played by Providence in life. *Captain Singleton* is, or claims to be, the account of a conversion. *Religious Courtship* is the handbook of unexceptionable married pairs. Piety tends to become emotional, and a certain sentimentality is in keeping with the tone of souls, as prescribed by the hygiene of experience. Defoe, to be sure, does not overdo pathos; his objectivity in most cases is not without some dryness. The exploits of his buccaneers are narrated with strange impassivity. But when the great themes of life, death, and salvation are evoked, an austere, sober emotion gives dignity to the story. The human drama, in *Robinson Crusoe*, appeals to us; there is here an indissoluble fusion of what is earthly and what is divine.

By these features he is one of a class; by others he is himself. His personality is elusive, and it is with difficulty that one can unite all the expressions of it; there still subsists in it some obscurity. The subconscious victories of utilitarianism over principle do not suffice to explain the broken line of his existence, his changes of opinion, his secret activities; nor do his

momentary difficulties justify his superhuman fertility of production. It seems as if nature, in this exemplar of the middle-class search for balance, had deposited some measure of unsettled psychological disposition, along with that incalculable impulse, the itch and the talent of writing. His political and business life was one of adventure. Defoe, the writer, has not only a matter-of-fact eloquence, ingenuity,

which implies some

y, of the soul; he is

ence might counsel

by a force of ironical argument equal to that of Swift. *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* is a masterpiece of merciless

away such a veil is a dangerous deed, and so Defoe learned to his cost. In other circumstances, he abandoned the simple attitude demanded by the solidarity of his class; in the closing years of his life, all parties distrusted him. . . .

of the social circle whence he comes, which he possesses in a superior degree, a gift of personal expression, a creative imagination. The poet in Defoe is not to be overlooked. He belongs to the classical age, in the sense that his lines

of literature. *The True-Born Englishman* is a satire full of flavour, where racial and family pride is most severely derided; in it the heroic couplet is handled by a plebeian rhymester who is not above using doggerel on occasion, but who has read his Dryden, and is not unworthy of the comparison at times. A free and vigorous inspiration, in which the desire for correctness makes itself felt but without being either efficacious or tyrannical, produces here, so to say, a popular classicism.

The novels of adventure which follow one another in close

iomentary difficulties justify his superhuman fertility of roduction. It seems as if nature, in this exemplar of the niddle-class search for balance, had deposited some measure f unsettled psychologi alculable impulse, the olitical and business lif

riter, has not only a matter-of-fact eloquence, ingenuity, which implies some y, of the soul; he is ence might counsel y a force of ironical argument equal to that of Swift. *The hortest Way with the Dissenters* is a masterpiece of merciless nalysis; here the obscure reactions of dogmatism and in-

ttitude demanded by the solidarity of his class; in the closing ears of his life, all parties distrusted him. . . .

This erratic destiny is that of an exceptional being. He is reat neither by his abstract reasoning, nor by any high artistic onscience; but he has, in addition to the common faculties f the social circle whence he comes, which he possesses in superior degree, a gift of personal expression, a creative magination. The poet in Defoe is not to be overlooked. He belongs to the classical age, in the sense that his lines

of literature. *The True-Born Englishman* is a satire full of lavour, where racial and family pride is most severely de- ided; in it the heroic couplet is handled by a plebeian rhyme- ter who is not above using doggerel on occasion, but who as read his Dryden, and is not unworthy of the comparison t times. A free and vigorous inspiration, in which the desire or correctness makes itself felt but without being either fficacious or tyrannical, produces here, so to say, a popular lassicism.

The novels of adventure which follow one another in close

that sees and knows how to picture up its visions by means of words. Without being an artist in the proper sense, he has also artistic merits. He is clear, as the activity of his mind is clear; his language is concrete, like his thought; but one feels that his handling of certain devices is too skilful not to be voluntary, and not to reveal the pleasure he himself finds in them. The racy flavour, the expressive power of his style, the humour which he imparts to it, are the gifts of a writer

class literature in the plane of a fully accepted classicism; and Steele and Addison remain first and foremost the authors of the *Spectator*.

plined art of his best pages owes much to the example of Addison.

A fertile mind, a generous personality, attractive even in its weaknesses, Steele draws to himself sympathies that his friend of a colder and more conscious nature repels. His literary initiative has been sometimes honoured more than it deserves. Though in the creation of an original variety of essay he has played a decisive part, he alone, or even more especially he, cannot be credited with having brought it to the degree of perfection it attained. He has his charming felicities; but the art of Addison has a finished distinction, of a more even, more sober, and more secure effect.

The Christian Hero is the most significant of confessions. Steele expresses therein without knowing it the deep-rooted demand which the middle classes laid down as a condition of their rallying to the doctrine of the classicists. Classicism to them is acceptable only if it is moral. To the pagan traditions therefore will have to be added the spirit of Christianity, as interpreted by the Puritan conscience. The wisdom of the Stoics, declares Steele, is not enough to live and die by; the virtue of antiquity can retain its hold over the imagination, but the realities of conduct escape it; only the lessons of Christ can awaken in souls a spirituality capable of sustaining that courageous independence towards the world whereby true heroism is known. The needs of moral regularity, of idealism, of feeling—such are the tendencies which the middle classes bring to that transposed expression of the inner life out of which literature is made. To them it will often be only a convention, as Steele himself did not remain on the level of the precepts he laid down; but, henceforth, conscience will find a necessary tranquillity in the official sway of these rules, even when they are not strictly observed in practice. Through them the tone of social life will be gradually altered.

The *Tatler* is the individual work of Steele. It appeared thrice weekly, and preserved the features of periodicals given over to general information, such as the *Athenian Mercury* of Dunton, and the *Review* of Defoe.[1] Each number treats of several themes, and allots special headings to literary and political news. But Steele soon discovers the task to which his surest instinct inclines him: the reform of manners. He borrows from Swift the comic figure of Isaac Bickerstaff,

[1] For the beginnings of the press and periodical publications in England in the seventeenth century, the part of L'Estrange, Dunton, etc., see an historical summary and a bibliography in the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. vii, Chap. XV; vol. ix, Chap. I; and W. Graham, *The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals, 1665–1715*, 1926.

astrologer and magician, a clever diviner of the private secrets of his fellow-beings; and in a series of imaginary portraits, which conceal real originals, he undertakes to bring to the notice of the public and of the guilty people themselves the errors of vanity, egoism, and extravagance which disturb the pleasant and decorous order of social intercourse. The work thus begun is somewhat analogous to that which the *salons*

much later than that of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; it is instinct with a middle-class and not an aristocratic spirit; again, it does not tend above all towards the refinement of language and thought, but towards the purification of morals and human relations. It is none the less, at bottom, of a

news, fashions, scandals, are discussed; an average opinion is created and formulated; it is already, in certain essential elements, the middle-class opinion which will hold undisputed sway in the nineteenth century. As yet it is not bold enough

which the excesses of the Commonwealth had brought into disrepute. The task of Steele and Addison is to reconcile these opposite tendencies, to moralize refinement and refine morality. They are able, thanks to their personal distinction and delicate tact, to bring about a synthesis in which aristocratic culture keeps a place large enough to reassure the intellectual susceptibilities of the classical age. There is

to realize it; but he seeks it chiefly by way of sensibility. The doctrine he outlines in the *Tatler* is already, to some

sistance to overcome in his nature that he may live in harmony with the doctrine. His temperament and his life reflect a happy balance, undisturbed by any accidents or doubts. He owes this harmony to the fact that his artistic creed and his moral faith were from the beginning united in a perfect fusion. With him the middle-class mind assumes a distinction which makes it easily equal to the most studied aristocratic fastidiousness; and his religious leanings confirm, instead of contradicting, the wholly intellectual hierarchy of artistic values which classicism is setting up.

His beginnings are academic and humanistic; he steeps himself thoroughly in the restrained elegance of the purest culture of antiquity; the past occupies him more than the

merce and finances of Genoa, the constitution of Venice, interest him; a mind of general scope and clear intelligence, but shrewd, and capable of concrete moral perception, he will readily busy himself with public affairs. His idealism is that of the middle classes: the sense of economic realities remains its very foundation.

The vocation of literature, meanwhile, is awakening in him; and poetry is then the best and speediest road to fame. So in the course of his travels he writes a letter in verse to his

skilled enough to escape in a large measure the defects of his qualities; but the qualities of his defects are not vivid enough to redeem the essential artifice of such inspirations. These are very creditable applications of the classical recipe, but without any serious originality. His opera, *Rosamond*,

...cal career, however,
Then it is that the
provides him with
the means of expression he is looking for; and out of the *Tatler* arises the *Spectator*.

The instrument might have meant little, but for the author's instinctive prevision, both of the laws governing it and of its possible effects; and this intuition testifies to a creative force in Addison, that is fed by his temperament and his experience. Like Steele, he has a desire, and feels the urgent need, for a reform in morals; he agrees with the deep-felt longing after a more decorous order of things, after a better regulated conduct, which is being evidenced since the manifesto of Collier; and while he does not, like Steele, reap the knowledge of human weakness from his own inward frailty, he has a natural leniency, a tolerant gentleness of soul, which temper a rather Puritanic severity of principle. It is greatly to Addison's credit that whereas he might have judged life above all from books, he showed himself an informed observer, a judicious critic of manners and characters. This he owes to a natural finesse, and a tact of thought; the habit of analysing, which his literary studies had developed, here finds itself directed, through a rare and felicitous harmony, towards the intelligence of souls; Addison fully realizes the doctrine of classicism because he possesses a lucid and exact notion of the matter which is henceforth to be his: the humours, the moral shades of human beings living in company; within certain limits, but with precision and security, he is a psychologist.

The *Spectator* has nothing about it of a periodical meant for information; it neglects the happenings of every day, save now and then, by an odd allusion; it gives itself up entirely—with the exception of the advertisements, the commercial tenor of which contrasts strangely at times with the contents themselves—to a daily essay on morality, literature, philosophy, serious or humorous reflection. Addison and Steele, aided by a few occasional collaborators, keep up this effort of speedy composition and renewal of subject-matter for more than twenty-one months; they relieve it through little devices, such as the insertion of real or fictitious letters, the insistence on certain themes, or on series of connected subjects which maintain and carry on the interest; and though the didactic tone ends by becoming dangerously pronounced, the collection as a whole forms the most charming, the most varied, and the least sermonizing of commentaries upon social life as it is, and as it should be.

At the centre of this life, and of its most active focus, the capital, stands a supposed spectator; at work with observant eyes, carefully noting the very details, and the external aspects,

of the comedy of human relations; with a mind that studies,

of its traits; and when once the bond of sympathy is established between him and his public, he comes to play a part of increasing importance, thanks to a repeated, daily action, in the intimate life of a select few. This part of director and lay adviser demands, in order to be happily sustained, an extreme pliancy, an intellectual authority, a natural gift of seduction. It is because they were able to display these merits that the authors of the *Spectator* have exercised a moral influence which counts in the history of English culture.

Their method is that of shrewd preachers who do no violence

play; they make vice, all excessive affectation, and the hundred and one superficial forms of egoism, equally ridiculous. At bottom, the ideal they teach is that of the repression of self-love; in it the best essence of Stoicism is mixed up with the principles of Christianity; and as this virtue is adorned with the elegances of mind and manners, it can be said that the idea of a 'gentleman' is thus defined, for a long period of time, in its modern and most widely liberal acceptation. But to consider the detail of the work, the *Spectator* acts through the fear of losing social approbation, and appeals, with readers in the world of society, to still interested motives. The art of living together, the duties of family life, the rules of true gallantry, the status and part of women in society,

conducts a crusade against duelling in the midst of jokes aimed at extravagant headdresses.

Such studies in manners almost of necessity tend to find a definite support in a series of individual sketches, of these again, some will stand out from the others, and acquire a superior consistency. It has been possible to say that the *Spectator* shows a premonition of the fortune that was soon to accrue to the novel of moral observation Like the *Tatler*, it shows us a club of original figures, but in this case the

types are developed, individual at once, and coloured w one and the same genial humanity. Among them, Sir Ro de Coverley, an idealized country gentleman, of softer characteristics, is a personage living enough to have taken place amongst the best known creations in literature. T outline of this figure, traced out by Steele, is filled in by Ad son with delicate touches; it is bathed in a light of indulge irony which gives it a [illegible] the delightful, smili portraits by means of [illegible] an art that is rich but not finer, will suggest his instinctive philosophy of c diality. The group of which he is the centre forms with h a discreetly idyllic picture of English society; and as Addis preaches the reciprocal goodwill of classes, the toning do of party rivalry, he does show some preference for the rep sentative of the trading upper middle class, Sir Andrew Fr port, the symbol of the new order of things, but he borro an element of the social virtue which he teaches from t patriarchal spirit of old agricultural England.

Such is the double movement animating the doctrine action, which the *Spectator* practically is: in its effort diffuse a moral tone of which the growing middle classes a the principal source, its bent is towards the future of natio life as of literature; but, in so far as it tries, underneath a g an aristocratic and dryly intellectual period, to link up ag the continuity of a broader personality and of this natio life itself, its trend is towards the past.

Moralizing sentiment here already reveals the directions which it will influence the tastes of the public and of write it tends to lead them back to simple, popular, and emotio values; to the great expressions of a poetic temperam formerly supreme, but now in disfavour. The return Shakespeare and Milton, which is perceptible on every si is confirmed in the *Spectator*; and the essays of Addison *Paradise Lost*, though one must not exaggerate the novelty their appearance at this date, have done much to establ the place of this recent English work in a hierarchy, the o principle of which at this epoch is furnished by classi tradition. Addison's criticism still strives, and not with reason, to ruin the shaken prestige of the 'conceits' a falsely elegant turns which classicism has now been oppos for two generations, but which, through an inevitable con sion, its cult of verbal perfection has sometimes seemed encourage. Addison reaches the extreme limit of his audac

when he praises the naïve or pathetic charm of old-time ballads, such as *Chevy Chase*, or *The Children in the Wood*, and thus stimulates the timid partiality of his middle-class readers for these spontaneous fruits of national genius, though he thinks it necessary to justify their taste by parallels borrowed from ancient literatures.

The variety of the subjects, a supple adaptation to the preferences of the public, and at the same time a sufficiently [illegible]

in keeping with an age when, on the one hand, the number of readers is increasing, when modern journalism comes into existence, and when serious themes can already be treated so as [illegible]

not again be found. The *Essays of Elia*, in the following century, will be an equally successful achievement, but a different one.

It is fair to trace to Addison the most solid merits of these little masterpieces, in which Steele has a substantial share. Addison possesses a firmer sense of composition, a more compact style; the quality of his prose is more equal; and it is under his guidance that Steele seems to have regularized an often delightful, but diffuse verve. With the chosen proportion of the whole, the simple elegance, the distinguished ease of a language that benefits without effort by all the progress of classical prose, one must above all praise the gift for expressing shades and conveying hints, and the delicacy

of the suggestions. These half-tones suit the aim of papers, which, though playful, are often concerned with morals, and implicitly follow the model of fashionable conversation; they are also in keeping with a discreet form of sermonizing; lastly, they supply the matter, the usual medium for a sly spirit of comedy, a humour, which, emanating from a general attitude of thought, radiates over everything which that thought touches upon, without however translating itself, most often, into words, by anything else than an inflection delicately significant of the feeling of their value which presides over their choice.

Addison died young, and these modest essays remain the masterwork of his life. The triumphal success of his *Cato* was due to the rivalry of the political parties, which both wanted to find favourable allusions in it. His comedy, *The Drummer*, owed its failure no doubt, as has often been said, to the lack of dramatic power; but it is a pretty piece of work, not wanting in observation; the dialogue has almost the finesse of Congreve, and although less brilliant is more natural. Addison would have left behind the memory of a wholly charming and attractive personality, had not Pope, full of the resentment of an estranged and embittered friendship, published after his death that terrible pen-portrait of Atticus,[1] which, with such cruel shrewdness, brings to light the under side of a saint's effigy. It may be said of this interpretation that it is admirably penetrating, and nevertheless unjust; the figure which it builds up systematizes latent possibilities which a character of strong will has neutralized in itself, without being able to destroy them, and the existence of which, entirely subconscious and dim, is only visible to a hostile and keen sight. Addison does not seem to have been innocent of an instinctive jealousy towards Pope; but Pope's wrongdoing with regard to him was more conspicuous.

4. *The Middle-Class Spirit and the Drama: First Symptoms.*—Addison was too much imbued with the classical tradition, not to allow it to dominate him when he came to write a tragedy. Within his own lifetime, the change of atmosphere due to the new social influences at work brings about a return to the national spirit of drama. The comedy of Colley Cibber and Steele is of a sufficiently marked tonality to be studied in connection with the beginnings of sentimental literature. The plays of Rowe and those of Young can be placed by the side of the literary compromises at which the inspiration of the middle class had stopped in the *Spectator*.

[1] *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, 1735; the portrait had been written at an earlier date.

They are interesting symptoms, but little else. Already in the work of Dryden himself, as in that of Otway and Lee, there was to be seen the survival of the seeds of emotion and art, the spontaneous flowering of which had been the free tragedy of the Elizabethans. Rowe[1] goes on further, even if there is a clearer consciousness in his return to the past. *The Fair Penitent* and *Jane Shore* are transitional plays; but despite the bloody fury of the first, despite the wholly exterior imitation of Shakespeare's style in the second—which has its

that they testify to the evolution of public taste; and this taste, while it returns with fondness to the memories of the Renascence theatre, tends in reality towards a moralizing sentimentalism. Rowe is half-way to the domestic drama which Lillo will bring to its full realization.

Young's[2] tragedies are a striking symptom of the inward movement of minds. Here we have a writer whose education

desire behind such work create an appreciable difference between these plays and those of Thomson, for example, whose *Sophonisba*[3] is cast in the mould of pure convention, and has more unity, but still less relief.

iil, 1899

J. R. Sutherland, 1929.

[2] Edward Young staged his *Busiris* in 1719, *The Revenge* in 1721. See Thomas, *Le Poète Edward Young*, 1901; 2nd part, Chap III. For the poetic work of Young see below, Book III, Chap. II.

[3] 1730 See Book III, Chap II.

sonality reveals another moral ideal, that is to say, another literary ideal as well.

The present chapter is inseparable from the preceding one; it is the continuation and natural development of it. The work of one writer—Steele—is divided between both. Sentimental comedy is the earliest artistic expression of the silent transformation of public taste.

2. *Philosophy and Mysticism: Berkeley, Shaftesbury, Law, etc.*—The philosophy of this period is not entirely rational. The temperaments of several among its most original thinkers are modified by a strong admixture of different tendencies.

Berkeley's idealism[1] is, above all, a metaphysical theory; if he denies the actual existence of matter, he proceeds not by intuition, but by reasoning, and demonstrates his thesis in conformity with the strictest logic. But at the origin of the doctrine there is certainly a deep prepossession of a religious and moral nature; his very intelligence is impassioned; and the character of the man is all lit up with the warm radiance of a sentimental and humanitarian zeal.

scenery of th [illegible]
he had admi [illegible]
As early as 1 [illegible]
regeneration, which he deems necessary in order to quicken the conscience of an impious and corrupt age.[2] He has a high notion of his episcopal duties, and deems it a part of them to concern himself with social reforms. Pope, who was not lavish of such praise, granted him 'every virtue.'

His clear prose, of a perfect simplicity and ease in the explanation of subtle theories, has, especially in his *Dialogues*, a charm that is almost Greek. There is a wholly classical

[1] George Berkeley, 1685-1753, born in Ireland, was connected with Trinity

intellectualism in the rigour of his philosophy of 'ideas,' which turns the data of experience, for each individual, into a system of signs, a divine language, presented to our consciousness by an external and omnipresent Spirit. The idealistic preoccupations—in the emotional sense—which direct this doctrine towards a kind of enthusiastic paradox, are not at first revealed in the unfolding of its quiet audacity.[1]

But with the passing of years, Berkeley's thought draws nearer Plato, and becomes impregnated with a more obvious mysticism. The aroma of his personality is felt more distinctly in that strange work *Siris*, where the progress of mind along the chain of existence, from the most humble physical properties even to spiritual virtues, traces the stages of actual divine emanation; and where the deciphering of the universe is guided by the intuitive effort of the imagination. It is in a Christian but at the same time pantheistic philosophy that this remarkable thinker completes his progressive development; and starting from Locke, he finally joins the Platonic tradition, so living a force in England since the Renascence, and which the age of dominant reason had almost entirely interrupted.

The link with Locke, and the divergence of opinion with him, are not less marked in Shaftesbury.[2] He is his pupil, and in a sense continues his thought; he protects Toland; his religious opinions make him regarded, and not without cause, as one of the Deists; his *Letter concerning Enthusiasm* (1708) gives vent to the irony of an aristocratic intellect when confronted with the coarse intolerant zeal of a popular fanaticism. His attitude is that of an enlightened, detached onlooker; the eighteenth century will see many of these courteous, sceptical observers, and it is amongst them that the classical temperament, in its lucid and arid form, will best perpetuate itself.

But Shaftesbury, in other respects, figures as an apostle.

[1] The work of John Norris serves as a link between Berkeley and Malebranche, the latter of whom was adapted by Norris in his *Essay towards the Theory of an Ideal of the Intelligible World*, 1701–4.

[2] Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, grandson of the minister of Charles II, was born in 1671, and had Locke for a tutor; of delicate health, he passed the greater part of his life abroad, and died in 1713. His *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, 1711 (2nd edition augmented, 1713), was a collection of various treatises, which appeared from 1699 to 1710. Ed. by Robertson, 1900. See Rand, *Life, Letters, etc., of Shaftesbury*, 1900; Fowler, *Shaftesbury and Hutcheson*, 1882; C. A. Moore, *Shaftesbury and the Ethical Poets in England* (Publications of Modern Language Association of America), 1916; E. Tiffany, *Shaftesbury as Stoic* (idem), 1923.

His favourite masters are the Stoics and Plato; he reconciles them with a Christianity that is broad and coloured by an eclectic idealism. He has the tastes, and often the conduct,

himself very clearly from Locke. His doctrine emphasizes the naturally altruistic instincts of human nature; our affections, he holds, bring us to desire the happiness of others, and a rule of life can thus be framed upon the balancing of egoism and the gift of self. Conscience will have as a guide, in this delicate fusion, a superior intuitiveness, which will
od and what is evil. This
e aspect of the aesthetic
of things. For creation

This theory of the perfection of the universe has had its echo in the pantheistic optimism of the *Essay of Man*, from which Pope drew happy inspirations. As he expounds it, Shaftesbury's prose warms up to a lyric eloquence which has been charged, not unduly, with an elaborate and artificial distinction, but which possesses, nevertheless, an indisputably contagious virtue. This critic of enthusiasm, who is also in another sense its defender, is an enraptured lover of all that

so not a few of his pages are already—in every respect save
His very wide in-
the international
principle.

For long, Shaftesbury was not given his true place in the history of ideas. This unjust forgetfulness has since been amended. The quality of his moral personality is noble; his thought is actuated by a passion which excludes neither lucidity, nor yet the most genuine and heartfelt tolerance. Intellectually he has been a fruitful force. His work is rich in ideas, the formulae of which have been outstepped by the modern conception of ethics, but not perhaps in the sphere of creative impulse. Whatever may be the weak points of his doctrine, it cannot be denied that in an epoch of dry

matter-of-fact thinking: he soothed the imagination of readers with a music which appealed to the emotions, which set vibrating the presageful echo of future voices.

His disciple, Hutcheson,[1] systematizes his theory of oral sense. On the other hand, he grants to the exercise is instinct a sanction in the nature of a pleasure; th tue coincides with the pleasurable effusion of a benevolen ich finds its happiness in that of others. Duty, therefor ds to merge in the search after a common good, an itarian ethics, against the egoistical form of which Shaftes y had reacted, again become the end towards which th taneous movement of English thought is tending.

eanwhile, the truly mystical inspiration is concentrated in isolated thinkers, who give expression in literature to the ntense religious fervour of certain sects. William Law[2] most eminent figure in this group, whose secret action heart of an age of reason must not be overlooked. He the connecting link between the vast Puritan movement seventeenth century, and the Methodist revival of hteenth.

Serious Call is one of those books which, for two es, have been handed down from generation to genera- a middle class ever intent on the reading of pious It must not be confounded with the average edifying liocre tract. Despite its prolixity and repetition, the s value by reason of the cogency and wealth of its systematic development, and its nervous style. ric, at times a trifle luxuriant, is wholly classical, nned into flame by an inward zeal which tends, ral end, to the mystic union with God. Above all, n of an uncompromising Christianity denounces all g foibles, the indulgent weaknesses of the world; the arguments of lukewarmness and compromise; the whole soul, and claims it unreservedly for the g practice of faith.

r and less well-known works of Law give definite

[1] tcheson, 1694–1746, professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow, *nquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, 1725; *Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections, etc.*, 1726. *Ioral Philosophy* (1755) appeared after his death. See Scott,

[2], 1686–1761; *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*, 1728; *on*, 1731; *An Appeal to All that Doubt*, 1740; *The Way to Divine* *Serious Call*, ed. by Overton, 1898; see Overton, *William d Mystic*, 1881.

shape to his intellectual adhesion to mysticism. *The Case of Reason* refutes Tindal in attacking what is the essential principle of Deism—the possibility for the human mind of knowing with certitude the attributes of the Divine, and the general plan of creation. Assigning to reason its limits, it is the very foundation of belief on which classicism is built that Law is putting to the test. Later, he becomes impregnated with the influence of Jacob Boehme, and *The Way to Divine Knowledge* expounds, in a style that is always controlled but at the same time inspired, the conditions and stages in the reunion of the soul with God, that is to say, in the return of the part to the whole whence it emanates.

Law is a direct predecessor of John Wesley. He foreshadows the religious revival which will be one of the moral preparations towards the renewing of literature.

3 *Poetry: Lady Winchilsea, Watts.*—The poetry of this age has isolated notes which pure classicism cannot explain. Outside of these scattered elements, there are a few poetic temperaments in which an inspiration of a clearly different character is concentrated. In Thomson, as early as 1726,[1] the feeling for nature assumes the importance of a central, privileged theme. But Thomson is one of a numerous group of descriptive poets, each of whom forms a stage in a long transition, throughout the course of the century; he must not, therefore, be separated from them.

The deep continuity of the current of imaginative emotion which has dried up on the surface, in literature, but which persists in the subconsciousness of many, and preserves an active if not aesthetic force in the moral life of numerous groups, is already revealed in the natural instincts of some dissident personalities, during the first years of the century. Lady Winchilsea,[2] after having written a Pindaric poem in keeping with the taste of the day, abandons herself to the direct suggestion of simple things—a tree, the song of the nightingale, the peace of evening: she describes the veiled splendour of the landscape, the reflection of the moon and of the trembling leaves upon the waters, the mysterious majesty of ruins, and even to the shiver of fear which the silent approach of a horse calls forth when the pasture deadens the sound of its hoofs: out of all these fugitive emotions, she feels

[1] The first of the *Seasons*, *Winter*, appeared in 1726.

[2] 1660–1720. *The Spleen*, 1701; *Miscellany Poems*, 1713; *Poems*, ed by J. M. Murry, 1928

that a brooding mood is taking shape, too full and fraught with meaning to be expressed in words; and her *Nocturnal Reverie* is thus one of the most impressive paradoxes in the history of literature, striking as it does, at this date, the very modern note of a Romanticism in which Wordsworth, a century later, will recognize his own.

With Isaac Watts,[1] one touches the link between the spiritual fervour of a still active though latent religious life, and the possible renovation of poetry. The contemporary of Law, Watts gives expression in verse to a faith that is less mystical but as ardently sincere; something of this ardour animates and raises his lyrical effusions, without succeeding, however, in melting the cold surface of a rather artificial language. But while he is not a renovator of form, he owes it to the truth of his inspiration that he has written songs which pious English souls have never since forgotten. Among attempts of very unequal value, spoiled in many places by the abuse of classical convention, and despite the rigour of an austere Puritanism, he has known how to reconcile zeal with an earnest simplicity in tones of moving appeal. His *Divine Songs for Children* have lines which make one think of Blake; and this instinctive effort of adaptation leads him, at least, to seek rhythms which are freer, and sometimes happily successful; one of these is his blank verse, which through the analogy of the sentiment as of the measure is not unlike that of Cowper.

4. *The Beginnings of Sentimental Comedy: Cibber, Steele.*—It is in the theatre that sensibility finds the largest scope. The new public, with whom middle-class influences tend to play a dominant part, here exercises an action more quickly appreciable than elsewhere; it begins to transform comedy, where the aristocratic spirit of the Restoration had for long prevailed. The initiative of Colley Cibber, then that of Steele, answer to the latent needs of audiences to whom the sorry plight—cynically presented—of merchants made butts of by young fashionable noblemen, no longer offers the same attraction. The instinct of the majority of those frequenting the theatre now inclines them to wish for real plots, where the joys and troubles of their uneventful lives may be productive of heart-stirring emotions; where the middle classes may no

[1] 1674–1748; a dissenting minister, preacher and poet; *Horae Lyricae*, 1706; *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, 1707; *Divine Songs for Children*, 1715; *Psalms of David Imitated*, 1719.

scepticism remains fashionable; lastly, the tone of a primarily rational literature. The death of Queen Anne, the succession of the Hanoverian sovereigns, restore to the court the influence it had formerly exercised as a radiating centre of lighter morals. The graph, so to say, of the reform begun in manners falls after 1714. Artificially prolonged, comedy after the model of the Restoration survives with Mrs. Centlivre, with Colley Cibber himself, always on the watch for the changes of public taste, and Gay, whose *Beggar's Opera* is a parody of sentimentalism in its early stages.

Thus the rapid movement which appeared to be carrying the century towards the victory of sentiment flags for a generation, owing to social circumstances, and the widespread authority of the classical standards. This check is noticeable both in the progress of manners and in the transformation of literature. It secures for the great period of classicism a relative homogeneity; it throws back to the end of this period such literary events as the decisive appearance of middle-class tragedy, which allow one to realize the evolution of taste in an incontrovertible manner.

The sentimental comedy of Cibber and Steele is therefore a precocious symptom. Its value, moreover, is mainly that of a symptom. With Cibber, the appeal to the emotions is of the most superficial nature; it is the less profound, as the man's temperament does not possess the reserves or sincere sensitiveness which alone could nourish it. Cibber was, above all, a clever stage manager. His private life reveals something other than the family virtues and the tender indulgence of which his plays fondly parade the contagious example. His theatrical instinct, always eager for new effects, shows him from his very first comedy what a hold a certain strain of pathos can have over middle-class feelings, and the pleasure that can accrue from the shedding of gentle tears, at the sight of a conjugal reconciliation in which an exalted love conquers a hard-hearted husband.

What was really new in such a scene was not the theoretical intensity of the sentiment—tragedy, as we have it in Otway or Dryden, was full of frenzied emotions—but its familiar, probable, average, or in a word, middle-class quality, its possible analogy with the actual experiences of the spectators, and above all, the moral optimism which emanated from it, the infectious power of an effusive faith in the latent fecundity, always rea[illegible] to burst forth, of a source of goodness hidden

in the depths of the soul. Classical rationalism analysed man with a lucidity immune from illusions; with the authors of the first sentimental comedies, as with their contemporary, Shaftesbury, there is adumbrated the doctrine of a human nature that is generous and good, a doctrine of which Rousseau will be the European prophet.

Success gives Cibber a clearer conception of his thesis; he

tion. While the elegant coxcomb, Lord Foppington, now

With all his serious faults, Steele endows sentimental comedy with greater finesse and charm. With him, the personality does not jar with the work; his life was not exem-

and to sustain the part of apostle which from now onwards he assumes, results afterwards in the overstressing of his didactic intent.

The Conscious Lovers, however, has a great success as an appeal to sensibility. In vain does Dennis point out that the play does not show us real characters, but examples to follow, and further, that the subject is not comic; the public does not trouble to know if it is wrong in applauding a comedy at which

explain this complicity, still other reasons are to be found than the contagious emotion of the play. *The Conscious Lovers* portrays on the stage a merchant, Mr. Sealand, virtuous, dignified, philanthropic, the model of the 'gentleman' according

BOOK III—THE SURVIVAL OF CLASSICISM
(1740–70)

CHAPTER I

DOCTRINAL CLASSICISM: JOHNSON

1. *Character of the Period; Formative Influences.*—The middle years of the eighteenth century do not show any distinct cleavage in the history of ideas or in that of form. Classicism continues to rule after the age of Pope. The authority of the doctrine is not shaken; on the contrary, it seems to be definitely established.

It is natural, however, to place the close of a period about the years 1740–5. A brilliant set of writers, whom life and literature had equally brought together, now pass out of sight; and with them are lost or subdued a brilliance, a sureness, a still youthful maturity in the balanced handling of rational

announced; principles mostly remain as they were. But life

lack as yet the boldness, the consciousness of themselves that would have secured the renewing of expression; they are modelled upon traditions, and do not question the rules in force. If they are innovating, it is usually without knowing

which classicism admitted in theory, but which its instincts and scruples did not allow it to push to its logical end.

The new period is therefore of a very definitely mixed character. It prolongs that which precedes it by keeping practically along the same lines. At the same time, it develops with growing vigour the germs of dissidence, the signs of psychological renovation, which the classical discipline had been unable to stamp out. The duality already visible in the time when Pope and Defoe, Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury were writing, continues and only becomes more marked. But whilst the classical age was stable enough, one can henceforth feel a progress, a movement at the back of things. The two elements vary in their absolute value, and in their relationship. If official authority is still vested in classical rationalism, the reviving forces of sentiment and of middle-class literature now assume larger proportions, and become encroaching; the balance is already turning in their favour; and one has no difficulty in foreseeing that a day will come when the prestige of tradition will give way before all this secret growth of innovating inspirations.

The contemporaries had no prevision of this kind. No one succeeds Pope as the head of orthodox poetry; but a man is found to inherit his authority in criticism, and to assure the continuity of the doctrine. Johnson eminently represents the persistence of classical dogma. His sovereign influence in literature upholds against all menace, either open or concealed, the cult of artistic values which reason had established. Behind the outward permanence of his reign, the hidden work of transformation goes on in silence; all around him, the signs of a new spirit are visible. He it is, together with the influence he exerts, or the set of writers who are unreservedly attached to the old order of things, who perpetuates the fiction of official poetry; the standards of literature do not change.

Such are the general lines of this age—the middle years of the century, from 1740 to about 1770. They can be explained by the hidden working of moral and social forces. In the minds of authors and readers alike, the awakening of emotional tendencies, already perceptible as early as 1700, is confirmed and becomes accentuated; the change thus started develops. The call for sentiment begins to associate itself with the need of imagination. In society, meanwhile, a parallel and connected movement takes place; the middle class is more and more making its own will recognized in

politics, in life and manners. The authority of the aristocracy

Admitted to a share in social power, the middle class adapts itself to the culture in vogue, not without correcting it in the direction of its own genuine preferences. It appropriates classicism, after having impregnated it, so to say, with its

The middle class of 1740 does not bring with it any clear

and similar, but distinct class, more numerous, and proceeding

its aristocratic origins.

Johnson is the head and symbol of this survival of a tradition that is secretly undermined, but that is still kept up through its outer supports, and that even draws a certain increase of vigour from the new social elements. He represents a temporary fusion, which seems decisive and final, of

between movements, men, and works that are animated by the spirit of yesterday, or by a spirit that has scarcely changed, and others in which the new inspiration is predominant; between a literature of reason and a literature of sentiment. The two masses, on the whole, almost balance each other, though only one of them has an impulse that carries it towards the future, and a force of attraction that constantly adds to its substance.

2. *Johnson: his Temperament.*—The personality of Johnson[1] counts for more than his literary work. His influence proceeds from the bulk and the weight of his character, the powerful base upon which are built up his opinions and ideas, and of which these seem to be only the slightly specialized prolongation.

His was a figure of note among his contemporaries; his physical traits have been given permanence by the painter Reynolds in a speaking portrait—the burly figure, the neck

[1] Samuel Johnson, born at Lichfield in 1709, the son of a bookseller, studied at Oxford and essayed the profession of schoolmaster, then sought his fortune n London as an author. His first attempts were protracted and difficult; he ollaborated in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, where from 1741 to 1744 he wrote he Parliamentary reports; at last he became known and was rescued from enury by certain occasional writings, two satires, *London* (1738) and *The anity of Human Wishes* (1749), the *Life* of his friend, the poet Savage 744), and his tragedy, *Irene* (1749). He edited periodicals, *The Rambler* 750–2), *The Idler* (1758–60), the former during the time when he was carry- out the vast enterprise of his *Dictionary* (1747–55). Then he wrote a ral novel (*Rasselas*, 1759), and prepared an edition of Shakespeare (1765). 1762 a government pension brought him leisure; from now onwards he was ked up to and played the part of a general guide and adviser to literature. 763 he met Boswell, his biographer, and in 1773 made with him an excursion cotland, of which he gave an account (*A Journey to the Western Islands of land*, 1775). His last work was *The Lives of the Poets*, a series of bio- hical and literary memoirs meant to introduce to the public a collection ty-two modern English poets. He died in 1784, and was buried in West- er Abbey. His friend James Boswell (1740–95) published the story of fe: *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, 1791, revised and enlarged in 1793. *orks of Johnson*, ed. Chalmers, 1806, etc. See *Bibliography of S. Johnson*, Prideaux Courtney and D. Nichol Smith, new ed., 1926; *Dictionary*, d., 1773, the last revised by the author; ed. by Latham, 1866–70; *s*, ed. by Hill, 1887; *Johnson on Shakespeare*, ed. Sir W. Raleigh, 1908; hol Smith, *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, 1903; *The Works English Poets (with the Lives of Johnson)*, ed. by Chalmers, 1810; *Lives English Poets*, ed. by Hill and Scott, 1905. *The Journal of a Tour the Hebrides with Johnson*, by Boswell, ed. by Hill, 1887; *Life of Johnson*, Glover, 1901; Everyman's Library, 1906; *Selected Letters of Johnson*, y R. W. Chapman, 1925; *The Critical Opinions of Dr. Johnson*, ed. J. E. 1926. See Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 1840; J. Bailey, *Dr. Johnson and his* 913; Grant, *Life of Johnson* (Great Writers), 1887; Sir W. Raleigh, *ys on Johnson*, 1900; Sir L. Stephen, *Johnson* (English Men of Letters), combe, *The Age of Johnson*, 1900; P. H. Houston, *Doctor Johnson, a Eighteenth Century Humanism*, 1923; R. Wieder, *Le Docteur Johnson, téraire, essai de biographie psychologique*, 1944.

sunk between the shoulders, the thick features, with a heavy chin, a narrow wrinkled forehead, and full lips; the questioning and frowning gaze; the expression of concentrated, somewhat bitter seriousness. From it all there radiates a philosophy of experience and reflection, thought out by a clear judgment, by a balanced mind, and rooted in the resolution of an energy bound up with the supreme needs of action.

associated with an uncouth exterior, ranked Johnson among the national heroes. He has in a very full measure, indeed, the value of a symbol; he represents the intellectualized, superior type of the middle-class citizens who are now claiming and are already getting possession of the moral control of society.

Born as he was in the midst of books, he begins in his

rational attitude of mind, without excess or system, more empirical yet than logical; conservative tendencies; the sincerity of a personal judgment that has revised for itself all time-consecrated admirations, and has almost always dis-

ceptional assurance as well as an exceptional conviction; and

mind in self-communion speaks with almost mystic intensity.

The search for balance, with Johnson, is an effort of will, a struggle against himself. Without being in the least romantic his is a troubled if not divided soul; a narrow but deep sensibility lies hidden beneath its rough exterior. *Bourgeois* classicism still rests upon the ascendancy of rational needs; but along with the imperious desire for a principle of morality a certain amount of emotion has been infused into it.

And yet, Johnson is the enemy of sentimentalism: his very dictatorial taste clings to all that is sure, tested, and verified; he feels a craving, not indeed out of timidity and passiveness, but as the result of reflection, for normality, for the happy mean; he loathes extremes in everything. A code in art chimes with his instinctive need of a moral code; he accepts it and approves of it, therefore, for motives of a more varied and more human nature than was the case with the classicists of the previous generation; and by thus giving it a richer substance of impulses and tendencies, he unwittingly makes it more flexible, and to a certain extent broadens it. His scale of literary values is no longer quite the same as that of Pope; he differs from him in his estimate of Shakespeare, whom he feels and appreciates more intimately. But this code in return partakes of the dogmatic character of a creed: and just as with all beliefs in which conduct is involved, it hardens against all threat of a change. Johnson meets any innovation in literature with unconquerable distrust. The principles of the art of writing remain the same for him as when they were formulated by the masters of modern classicism, after the model of the ancients. As for the signs of unrest, and the initiatives which are coming to light around him, he either ignores or condemns them. He looks upon the heroic couplet as the highest form of verse; rhyme, he holds, is indispensable o poetry. To imitate the Spenserian stanzas is but a futile vhim. When confronted by the growing popularity of scenic escription, of 'nature,' he shows but indifference, and almost isdain. He lives and dies without having understood the eep need for renovation with which the minds of his conmporaries are pregnant.

Thus classicism has from now onwards become a dogma; is kept alive through its connection with the moral and cial needs of authority, order, and tradition, rather than ough the direct and simple demands of aesthetic taste. the moment when inspiration seeks new ground, when ative impulses tend to become the privilege of another

temperament, and of a new psychological attitude, the

continuous development. Many years pass before he finds

and critic, and it is as such, sustained by the rich reserves of

not pass unnoticed; Pope felt in it the promise of fame. But the silent decisions of instinct are directing into other channels a mind to which prose comes more naturally than verse. Once again, however, he returns to satire; *The Vanity of*

quite easily with Juvenal's pessimism. These couplets, in spite of their pauses, which the ear foresees and expects, and in spite of their language, strewn as it is with abstractions, quiver with an inner sincerity, that now and then bursts forth in the vividness of a novel epithet, or in energetic and condensed forms of expression.

These gifts, however, are not enough to revive a style of

morrow. Here again, the truth of moral conscience comes to the surface, while the form has a dignity that is at times other than pompous. But ethics do not suffice to sustain the

interest of a tragedy; and despite the support of Garrick, the spectators were not carried away by an emotion that was too devoid of tenderness. The feminine touch was always wanting in the genius of Johnson.

Disappointed in poetry, he turns to essay-writing. The *Rambler* and the *Idler* take up again the tradition of the *Spectator*. Reflections of a moralizing nature are here more in their place, and this part of Johnson's work is of a solid worth; it has better stood the test of time. To enter into it to-day is to give oneself up to the guidance of a judicious thinker, who sheds the light itself of good sense over all that he touches. His thought is so sound, and appears so natural, that one tempted into thinking it commonplace; and herein lies it artistic weakness. These robust analyses and argument manage in places to extract from the matrix of common truths precious stones which would sparkle more brilliantly if they were cut with greater skill; a vein of humour, of keen personal perception, runs through these exercises of a mind which one might regard as subjected to the automatism of a reasoning habit now become settled. But the style confirms the appearance of a wisdom too regular, too sure of itself, too equal throughout, not to be slightly passive: it is ample, imposing, oratorical, cast in a uniform mould; its very firmness, its infallibility, rouse in the reader a longing for fancy and paradox. Our remembrance of the *Spectator* has a grievous effect upon these essays; the grace, the lightness of touch of Addison and Steele offer too sharp a contrast to this massive robustness of Johnson, which becomes heavy and pedantic in comparison. Edified but not delighted, the general public contented itself with this verdict which no doubt was severe; and none to-day, save the specialist, ever reads these works. While lacking the rich picturesque interest of the *Spectator*, they are not without value to the historian of manners; and Johnson himself stands revealed in them with a relishable completeness.

4. *The Dictionary*.—The grammarian and the philosopher ad more success than the essayist. The *Dictionary of the nglish Language* remained, for nearly a century, a work of ference, consulted as such by the layman as well as by the vant. Johnson wanted to write both for the critics and for erely cultivated readers, to strike an average between a erary lexicon and a technical encyclopaedia. His desire above all to 'preserve the purity, and determine the sense, our English idiom'; whilst the value of words, and their

pronunciation, are still in a state of instability, he hopes to put an end to variations which his instinct condemns; the need of a set rule—a purely classical need—is the impulse he obeys. He was not specially equipped for this task; but he brings to it a trained power of reflection, a perfect knowledge of the [illegible] onnecting links and [illegible] sive meanings of a [illegible], with a remarkable [illegible]

[illegible]

lays down the principle of that necessary return to the national origins, a dim consciousness of which was being stirred, at that very time, by the inner movement of minds. The English [illegible]

influence; the literature of the Elizabethans is the permanent treasure store of the expressions and the forms in which the [illegible]

stitutes a part of the art of writing. He counts among the [illegible]

place through the qualities of logic, clearness, and finesse displayed by a mind nurtured on the classics, strong, well balanced, and penetrating. The omissions and errors of the *Dictionary*, notably in the yet badly explored domain of ety- [illegible]

elements of the language an undue predominance over others— [illegible]

conscience. But it has done nothing to restore to the language

that freedom of imagination, that concrete wealth of i which the practice of the Elizabethans possessed. Johnson's instinct is unwittingly in agreement with the preparation of Romanticism, his intellect and reflection o other hand are purely classical. The *Dictionary* register consecrates the intellectualization of the language effect a whole century of analysis and logical effort.

5. *'Rasselas'; Literary Criticism.*—A novel, or rath allegory, *Rasselas*; critical studies—the preface to the e of Shakespeare, *The Lives of the Poets*—such are Johr most solid claims to a place among the reputations are still alive to-day. The harmony of temperamen subject, and of form has allowed him in these writin realize his moral purpose with surer artistic success.

Rasselas is an oriental tale, placed in a rather vague se *and written in a somewhat abstract and solemn style.* classical generality of thought and language in these battles victoriously with the picturesque element, the particularity of the theme, of the incidents and chara Johnson's imagination evokes pictures with only a stroke of the pen; it glides over details without stoppir impatient is it to discover everywhere and continuall permanent basis of human nature. But this language n up for its slightly artificial quality by its accuracy and clea by a sense of balance which, although savouring of ora does not reside in the words but in the logic and the tho the vocabulary, often dignified to an excess, and some pompous, is refined by the intelligence of the proper me of words, and of their original use. The thought itself, can be summed up in commonplaces, is saved from bar by a fresh intuitive grasp of the complexity of things, c *illogical demands of conduct. Thus Johnson's ration* shows itself as wholly penetrated by a profound sense c limits of reason; the wisdom he teaches gives first pla experience.

The vivid interest of the book lies in this wisdom, a the revelation which Johnson has given us therein of hi *Rasselas* appeared a few weeks after Voltaire's *Candid* early to encourage the supposition of an influence; the lesson is rather similar in both tales, but they are non less very different in spirit. Johnson's pessimism sp from an unhappy, not an ironical state of mind. It is ac panied by a persistent profession of faith in virtue, whi

him is not a snare, but on the contrary represents the only [illegible] happiness [illegible] What [illegible] optimism on which the English conception of duty is built up. The [illegible]

[illegible] moralizing has a background of mysticism; with the avowal of the inevitable defeat which chance inflicts upon all wisdom, [illegible]

Despite the force of moral reflection in *Rasselas*, there is still some literary weakness: the characters, while they are not all lacking in substance, are too obviously brought into being in order to satisfy some didactic purpose. It is therefore a relief to come to works where without any artificiality Johnson's thought bears directly upon its object, and expresses itself quite independently. His judgment of Shakespeare marks a date in the history of criticism. Here the value of his opinion does not only rest on the massive strength, the sure penetrating power of a perception which probes to the very core of Shakespeare's art, and touches, shows up its deep humanity, its sovereign realism; for this perception, admirably accurate as a whole, is not devoid of some errors of vision when it comes to details. Johnson sees Shakespeare through his own preconceived opinions and grievances; and the reserves which he believes himself justified in making are proof of this. His taste is not a little shocked by the dramatic daring of the author of *Macbeth* and *King Lear*; Shakespeare, in his opinion, succeeded much better in comedy than in tragedy. Another charge is that these plays are evidence of a shocking indifference to moral justice. Shakespeare's anachronisms are disconcerting, his rhetoric cold and forced, and lastly, he cannot resist the fatal attraction of one of those double meanings in words which reduce the fastidious reader to despair. ... In this way Johnson emphasizes fairly well the points in which Shakespeare's aesthetics differ from those of his own time; and even if most of his remarks are justified, and on the other hand if his positive appreciation is wholly

animated by a warm sympathy, it can be said that this judgment remains essentially dogmatic; in no way does it depart from the point of view of classicism.

But it broadens this point of view to a remarkable extent. Classical doctrine is renewed by a fruitful appeal to the resources of literary psychology. It is towards inner observation that Johnson reverts, in order to tackle and solve in an original and daring manner the tritest problems of dramatic art. By interweaving comedy and tragedy, did Shakespeare commit the most unpardonable of offences, as orthodox criticism would have us believe? Is not this mixed art, after all, in keeping with the varied character of all experience and with the actual laws of attention? It is unpleasant i logic to be shifted from one tonality to another. Might i not be restful, in fact, for the needs of consciousness? Dryde had already sketched out an argument of this kind, but Johnson carried his analysis and demonstration still further.

It is therefore in the name of the concrete life of the mind that he answers the deductions of the rationalistic French critics. But he does not stop there; as if alarmed at his own audacity, and seeking to excuse himself, he attacks the rule of the three unities. When closely examined, in the light of experimental data, it fades away. Its origin is the fear of a disquietude of mind which does not exist; an imaginary fear, that has been forged by a psychology *a priori*. The unity of action alone is justified; those of time and place are the results of an abstract notion of theatrical illusion. Now, this illusion is never complete; were it so, it would destroy the very conditions of art. The fictitious changing from one place or from one time to another does not demand more from the spectator than that general goodwill without which no dramatic performance can take place. Here once more, Dryden's hesitant intuition is improved upon; and the Romantic theory of liberty finds itself wholly implicated.

This theory is to be felt everywhere like a hidden power, ehind the secure positions to which Johnson's classicism lings. In the background of his ideas, one perceives a secret ssitude of artistic sensibility, the need for a vast and uniersal renovation. We find him praising with a hint of irony e perfection of a 'regular and correct' writer; and describing e bright exuberance of Shakespeare in glowing terms, which veal the attraction that unknown to himself such an ideal has him. It is in rather an envious tone that he speaks of the

ages of youthfulness and freshness, when the substance of literature is new, when it lives upon pure observation, and owes nothing yet to books; when further the laborious dissection of the human heart has not destroyed that first bloom of emotions. In this high priest of the classical faith and of a rational art, sure signs evidence a yearning for another art, for another psychological tone; in his subconscious mind, he shares in the mental change taking place among his contemporaries.

The progress of the doctrine, the secret movement of a thought that is shifting towards the future, are less obvious in *The Lives of the Poets.* But these short compact memoirs are frequently little masterpieces.

Johnson was limited in his choice by the preferences of the publishers; he therefore accepts a perspective of literature which dates the rise of English poetry from Cowley. He

the minor ones, rhymesters of noble birth or penurious men of letters; and to each, with an equal conscientiousness, and

varieties of temperaments, even if it does not always show to all the same degree of sympathy. His judgment is not

moral substance in the works of the mind, and bases his estimate upon this inner element.

[illegible]

with felicity and sureness. No doubt, he attached importance to construction, to harmony of tone, t tions, to all the technique of classicism; but the su his taste is made up of an accurate sense of other a subtle elements; beside the fixed and certain qualiti answer to his primary exigencies, he leaves a plac charm, the evocative power, the music, the pure b the verse or of the image. We find here instances o terization too exact, too delicately shaded, not to h suggested by a creative intuition. This faculty, whi Johnson a great critic, has its limits; his tolerance certain audacities that are too new for him, while is offended by certain innovations that are too perso is unjust in his criticism of Swift, whose harsh manner secretly worries him. His judgment of C Collins is lacking in kindliness. A thick veil hides t from his gaze, conceals the coming of Romanticism. has given more solid reality to the classical scale c because he has founded it in the full perception of energies. And his remarks are written in a style force, rich in formulae, antithetic and often epigr but never to excess; a trifle solemn, stiff, oracular, bu saved from banality or turgidness by the essence of distinction which suffuses all the movements of his

This style, as always, but here more than ever, s man himself. Johnson usually handles a form th regular and balanced not to betray some rigidity in mood from which it proceeds; the ideal model of eve ness upon which he regulates the construction of his reminds us of pulpit eloquence; and more deeply st oppositions of terms and ideas, two by two, his parellelisms of expression, we find the latent actic supremely active rhythm of elevated English p rhythm of the Bible. But this oratorical develo frequently condensed in touches of vigour, in phr are brief and full of meaning, of a piercing sharpr one feels there much more than a mere verbal at the wealth of an intellectual originality, a concentr purified experience of thought and of life. Humc from the mastery over itself with which this exp realized and revealed; and from the supple liber permits the indirect expression of a concrete wisdon

Johnson therefore is possessed of a faculty of

teriorization, of improvisation, that is often of greater value than the laboured moments of a sustained style. It is in this way that he has perhaps put the best of himself into his talk. His whimsical remarks, collected by Boswell, are scarcely ever purely paradoxical, but are usually sudden intuitions, luminous as lightning flashes. They do not throw light upon everything; indeed many realities remain as it were impervious to them; and they have their own limitations. Yet within these limitations, they are creative. And the accent of a personality that is too complex not to remain spontaneous and full-flavoured, too lucid not to be conscious of its individual prepossessions, not to accept them and play with them in a

influence.

One does not get to know or to understand Johnson if one does not look for the direct echo of his voice and of his reaction to things in the accounts of his travels, either in the form of the diary of his tour in Scotland, which he himself has narrated, or in the relation of it which Boswell has left us under another title; or again if one does not read the minute, luxuriant,
al friend
with an
ation at

The influence of Johnson has been social and moral just as much as literary. He has definitely fixed the type of the

already begun. His decrees maintain and justify the valuations of the past, even it they be prompted by new reasons, he is therefore a reformer in nothing. Did he retard the evolution of literature? One cannot positively say so. The forces which are holding it back at this time are greater than the individuals themselves; in the conservative quality of his

moral and middle-class instinct, Johnson is a product j
much as he is a cause.

6. *The Poets of Classical Tradition.*—Posterity has co
look upon Johnson as the head of a school. But his r
terial authority was above all retrospective: he conse
the glories of the past. In his connection with the wri
his time, he rather exerted a diffuse influence, than play
part of an inspirer and guide. It is in vain that one
around him for his school of poetry; none such exists.

The reason is that life is now tending to abandon the
classical forms of verse. Classicism has become a set of
receipts, and devices; it may have the entire assent of c
faculties and enlightened taste: yet it no longer voic
instincts of creative genius. The impulse which still c
English literature forward during the first decades c
century exhausts itself by degrees in the field of poetry.
hardly encounters now any great names or any great wo

The age of Johnson, however, has its poets; but alm
of them who give proof of personal talent belong to ar
psychological temperament, and their classicism is mo
by an inner change. Their inspiration flows from
sources. Through the feelings which prompt their lines
reveal the depth of a transition in progress, even
prestige of classical form still sways them, and if expr
with them does not show the same renewal.

In the lineage itself of an integral classicism, we onl
poets of second- or third-class merit. The 'eclogues' of
Lyttelton,[1] and his occasional verse, are the docile
cises of an imitator of Pope; the works of his maturity
a rather different note. John Armstrong [2] shows an in
development, for while his poem, *Winter*, written in 17
veals a rather original vigour, his *Art of Preserving*
(1744) keeps, so to say, the promise of its title. The c
more simple with Matthew Green,[3] Nathaniel Cotton,[4] Ri
Glover,[5] and James Grainger.[6] And if Mark Akenside
not show, through his consciousness of the power of ima

[1] 1709–73; *The Progress of Love, in Four Eclogues* (Chalmers, *English*
vol. xiv).
[2] 1709–79; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xvi.
[3] 1697–1737; *The Spleen*, 1737.
[4] 1705–88; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xviii.
[5] 1712–85; *Leonidas*, 1737; *London, or the Progress of Commerce*, 173
Poems, Chalmers, vol. xvii.
[6] 1721?–66; *The Sugar-Cane*, 1764.
[7] 1721-70; *The Pleasures of Imagination*, 1744; Chalmers, vol. xiv.

aspects, a similar impoverishment of inspiration. The art of writing in verse becomes an end in itself, and is indulged in quite independently of any emotive impulse. Belonging to pure intellect, this poetry finds its nutriment in imitation, witticisms, conventional gallantry, the teaching of facts, the development of abstract themes. It is descriptive, witty, and didactic. The instrument it handles is for the most part the heroic couplet, the breaks and flow of which offer an unconquerably monotonous regularity; or, as in the case of Glover and Armstrong, a blank verse puffed out with a false eloquence by a rhetoric that is wholly verbal. Subjects such as *The Art of Preserving Health* or *The Sugar-Cane* suffice to indicate the artistic plane in which these writers deliberately place themselves. . . .

The literature of intellectuality is not dead. But classicism from now onwards seeks its natural expression rather in the domain of prose. It is the novel, or the philosophical treatise, that enables it to justify through outstanding works the doctrinal authority of which it jealously preserves the privil
with
studie
richer by turning its principle of truth to new uses.

To be consulted: Barbeau, *Une Ville d'eaux au XVIIIe siècle; la société élégante et littéraire à Bath, etc.*, 1904; Bailey, *Dr Johnson and his Circle*, 1913; Boswell, *Life of Johnson*; idem, *Selections*, ed. by Chapman, 1919; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chaps VII, VIII; Collins,

[1] Henry Brooke, a transitional figure in literature (see below, Book IV, Chap II, sect. 3), is better known as a novelist, his verse is after the pattern of the old school (*Universal Beauty*, 1735).

CHAPTER II

THE POETRY OF SENTIMENT

1. *Transitional Poets: Akenside, Falconer, etc.*—The eighteenth century in its central body is traversed by a development in poetry, the stages of which mark the progressive advent of a new inspiration. Just as the invasion of sentimentalism transforms the moral life, so the literature, and particularly the poetry, are transformed by the gradual appearance of themes based on sentiment, which come to take their place beside the classical motives.

This growth is a movement emanating from within. It modifies the soul of poetry before modifying its body; it does not reveal itself immediately, or regularly, or evenly, in the verse and the style. As there is always a certain connection between the matter and the manner, this change ends by making itself felt; but with more or less rapidity, more or less accuracy. For such connections are supple, and have nothing that might be termed imperiously binding; their elasticity permits of delays, adaptations, and compromises. In fact, the evolution in language and in verse follows at a distance the one effected in inspiration, and at a pace that varies according to individual accidents. On the whole, and despite numerous signs, some noteworthy initiatives, and a partial effort towards rejuvenation, the poetry of sentiment continues to express itself in classical forms. And we find in it the greatest variety of expressions. A certain intimate community of character is hidden beneath the most striking differences in general movement, literary kinds, subjects, and language.

This mass of writers and works, however, constitutes a whole, and should be studied from the aspect of its unity; at least if it be true that, even when dealing with poetry, literary history must choose its guiding lines and build up its framework according to spiritual affinities, rather than by analogies of form.

From the mental point of view, as from that of form, the diversity in temperaments does not lend itself to a rigorous and simple classification. The poets of sentiment are not

parted from the classical poets by any clear line. Th
domains overlap; or rather, there exists between them a
intermediate zone; and there we find a progressive ser
mixed personalities, who form the transition from one
to the other.

variously proportioned, of those of the new spirit. Sent
does not become in a moment, or without a struggle, for
person any more than for the whole society, the dom
element of life and thought. Unconscious imitations,
gestion, the influence of the surroundings, also play
part in suffusing with an emotional tone natures that
spontaneously immune from it. Thus it is that we w
in the case of several writers infiltrations of sentiment
which gradually alter the primitive singleness of their
being. And whenever these moral changes are not de
they result in divided inspiration, which must be looked
and classed as such.

The poets who show these hesitations are most oft
mediocre quality; they offer an open field to contradi
influences, without being able to come to a decision or
a choice. Yet they have the interest of mediocre write
whom are shown with greater clearness the changes in
of development. Such is Lord Lyttelton, who fro

awkwardly, but not without truth, and in the midst o
gorical trash, to the confused emotion of a very rom
melancholy Such again Akenside,[1] whose work is inter
in many respects. His main inspiration, and the fo

can gain by appropriating the grandeur and beauty of na

Wordsworth. Despite the intellectualism of the thought, the abstract nature of the style, a certain idealistic emotion at such times animates his poem, and imparts to it the value of a sign and a preparation of the future.

William Falconer [1] is still another transition poet, and of a very curious type. His mind is haunted by classical memories; his heroes have Greek names; his style aims at nobleness by way of generality; whilst his language is strewn with naval terms, he does his best to drown them in the purest jargon of the fashionable poetic diction. But all this artificiality is bathed in a diffuse sentimentalism; and, above all, it is broken through from time to time by a vigorous and sincere element of tragedy, a direct sense of the cruel realities of the sea and of death. A source of poetry refreshed through contact with genuine experience, and sensation, tries in vain to come to the surface from beneath a passive observance of literary conventions. Even in William Whitehead,[2] at a far advanced date in the century, one can find the persisting trace of the examples set by Pope, the intentions and the devices of a decadent classicism, unreadable odes; and at the same time, an elegiac sweetness and grace, a true feeling for landscape; while in one of his poems, *The Enthusiast*, are accents which convey with singular force all the rapture of solitude and of natural scenery.

Very many would be the examples of the same kind, if it were of any advantage to linger over them. Most of these poets owe the secret and partial change of their instincts to the moral transformation of the century, the rhythm of which they unconsciously follow, and to the influence of less timid writers. In their works we catch the echoes of Thomson, Young, Collins, Gray, and of all that poetic group with whom inspiration is clearly enough penetrated by the new spirit for one to be able to place it, unhesitatingly, on the direct road of the future.

2. *Nature; Thomson, Dyer.*—The growth of the poetry of sentiment proceeds by successive advances. Nothing is richer than emotion as a motive of poetry; in a sense, it constitutes the normal and necessary source of all rhythmic language. What is recommencing, therefore, is not a particular kind, but all the diversity of poetry itself.

No doubt, the eighteenth century will be far from exhausting this whole range. On account of the effect of social restraint,

[1] 1732–69; *The Shipwreck*, 1762; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xiv.
[2] 1715–85; *Poems*, Chalmers, vols. xvi and xvii.

which has a retarding influence upon moral evolution, it will give as yet only a sober sketch of its possibilities. It will be left to the following century to allow sentimental effusion all its intensity and freedom, and to decisively harmonize form with a renewed inspiration. But already we are shown with sufficient clearness the main lines along which this inspiration will work. And the successive appearance of these lines, as revealed by exact chronology, enables us to perceive without too much artifice a coherent order of development.

The first element which comes into prominence is the emotional theme of nature. The instinctive naturalism of the English mind was never completely neutralized by classical influences. The vigorous reviviscence of this tendency well before the middle of the century is therefore in itself nothing of a surprise. It must also be made clear that at its source this vein is less properly sentimental than it is sensitive. It represents more easily a continuation of classicism than will the purer emotions, freer from all material support, that will develop shortly after.

From a certain point of view, the feeling for nature with Thomson[1] springs from that realism of concrete description which is an essential element of classical art and which already, even with the masters of the school, was sometimes tinged by a

[illegible] of sentiment; [illegible] with the fact [illegible] allied to the intentions and devices of classicism.

[1] James Thomson, born in 1700, in the south of Scotland, was the son of a minister and studied at Edinburgh; renouncing an ecclesiastical career, he jour- [illegible]

His features are therefore above all mixed. In the light of his work as of his life, we find two men in him. The one is n amiable epicurean, care-free, the friend of easy leisure, who rough his mind, tastes, and character was very readily won ver to the cult of ancient beauty and of traditional literary odels. The other bears the stamp of an ecclesiastic education, ore severe and moralizing; religiously inclined, and fond also sentiment. Judged by certain traits, if the first Thomson is many ways at one with Pope, the second is already in keep with Richardson. And it is the second, no doubt, who is ter in agreement with the social and psychological movent in which the line of literary progression is dimly outlined. t seems temptingly simple to connect the classical elements he work of Thomson with the first group of tendencies, and elements of transition with the second. Such an interation will not be altogether wrong, but things are not so -cut. What we can distinguish as the most certain feature homson's originality—the sense of the physical world, the perception of nature—is made up at once of the two eraments which he unites in himself, and the distinction een which is, to say the truth, wholly abstract.

e scenery of the seasons, as Thomson paints it, is com of still general touches; a mind guided by literary ries, by time-consecrated models, constructs its main vork. It is the course of the sun through the signs of diac which sets moving this changing sequence; th resides over all the transitions; mythology is the b of the modern and real horizon in which the festiv sorrows of heaven and earth unfold themselves, in randeur and brilliance. The scenes of country bly assume the style of typical Virgilian episo it of the *Georgics* assembles and directs them. T atmosphere is more distinctly felt in a langu cholarly, strewn with Latinisms, where the epithet l character of conventional banality, and from whi iction' is by no means absent. Thomson describ educing from the multiplicity of facts the forms ey can be reduced, and which enable the mind hem. The seasons are the most general of thes e aspects of each season, the activities associate , are others. His inspiration of a generalizing an rend remains in so far intellectual; and the inne his style appears in the constant employment of the

definite article (not necessary for ordinary use), which suggests the influence of French syntax, and gives to the poetry as to the prose of this epoch the colour of a literature written under the constant stimulus of a search after universality of statement.

But as against the abstr

…, but the almost exclusive preoccupation with general truths kept its effort away from the wealth of reality. With Thomson, classical art opens itself broadly to the concrete; and immediately it receives a new vitality from this contact.

The reason is that the intelligence is no longer exclusively called upon to receive this inrush of sensations, to organize them, distribute them, despoil them of their characteristic element; the realism of Thomson is of a superior poetic fecundity, because it is the spontaneous exercise of a sensitive temperament, capable of strong and delicate impressions, trained from an early hour in the discriminations and enjoyments of the eye and ear and touch. The voluptuous epicurean whose instincts harmonize so well, in other respects …

… usual effects.

It is therefore difficult to believe that the coloured intensity of sensation …

… nature appears. It springs from the diffuse sentiment… of Thomson, is bound … religious, patriotic, and … the middle classes. Th… the charm of the English countryside is appreciated and depicted appears as it were animated by an inner ardour, strong enough to become a dominant passion of the soul, and to gather all its desires around itself.

But it is a tempered passion, without anything violent or exalted; a sort of fond complacency, that includes many

Thomson had given voice to deep aspirations, which many
hared; he restored nature to one of the first places among the
ubjects of poetry, a place from which she was never to be
islodged. He had immediately a following, and found imita-
rs, while his diffused influence is to be felt everywhere.
Dyer[1] is rather his rival than his disciple. A very short
terval separates the first of the *Seasons* from *Grongar Hill*.
It is through this poem that he has retained a place in the
mory of the cultivated public. *The Ruins of Rome* is an
bitious declamation, in which the blank verse has at times
gour of touch. *The Fleece*, a curious work, has more than
kind of interest, but it is almost devoid of poetic merit; on
other hand, no text allows one to appreciate better the
ortance of the national spirit in the literature of middle-
inspiration during the eighteenth century. Senti-
alism, and fondness in description, are here restrained by
ninant theme, at once technical and moral: the woollen
try, its material, its working, its markets, and the pride
in the prosperity which it supports, all form an ad-
e subject for a social study, but not for a poem in four
Dyer is here in the plane of purly didactic classicism;
e form of his work, with its very artificial quality,
thereby.
e side of these errors, *Grongar Hill* is a wonderful little
ot without a few blemishes. Here one can take stock
ilent progress made since Denham, and then Pope,
ted analogous themes. The contemplation of the
e assumes the dreaminess of meditation; the per-
reflected in a sensibility, and no longer in a curious
itectural intelligence, wraps itself in poetry; the
agueness allows a mystery to float over it, while an
trained in deciphering the aspects of things gives to
—to each kind of tree for example—all its pre-
And the short, light rhythm of Milton's descriptive
oduces a touch of fluidity into a delicately evocative

he direct heirs of Thomson, one might mention
et,[1] who applies the plan of *The Seasons* to the

born in Wales about 1700, the son of a lawyer, began as a
ng as a wandering artist his native country, where he wrote
26); after a sojourn in Italy he published *The Ruins of Rome*
lers, led the life of a country parson, published in 1757 *The*
in 1758. *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xiii.
e Excursion, 1728.

olished art, he
Winter's Day
eneath a con-
m Somerville,[1]
s that of *The*
Seasons, with less suppleness, and to whom nature is above

poetry. Underneath the vogue of the unrhymed line, one catches in its progress this wave of influence, awakening a latent susceptibility to the emotions which have their source

ture har-
symbol,
poetical
an easy
a sorrow
that is indulged in for its own sake. The poets of nature, from the first, showed themselves keenly desirous of tender emotions. Already in the opening stages of its new vogue the

them, appear those who draw their inspiration from night, death, and melancholy.

The origin of this theme is by no means simple. It arises from the need of feeling, which is developing, and therefore corresponds with a kind of transposed sensuality. But it has neither the aspect, nor the inner realization of itself, that the perverted taste for an imaginary emotion would imply. It knows itself, and perceives itself, as the orthodox stirring of a pious soul. It associates itself with the revival of religious and moral preoccupations. Midnight thoughts, the obsession

[1] 1675–1742; *The Chase*, 1735.

voured by the rise of the middle class. Puritanism had fo ng lived on sombre, tortured visions; it retains its colour ven if it mitigates its austerity in a way dangerous to itself hen consciously cultivating tragic thrills or a sadness tha ıs its delights.

By virtue of his wide influence in literature, Young is th entral figure of this group of poets; the success of his worl opularized a theme, and spread its fascination throughou l Europe, where a sympathetic echo is awakened and passe nong the nations which are being prepared by an inne ovement for Romanticism. In so far as melancholy i ound up with the feeling for nature, he is not an innovator he renewed emotion to which Thomson had given the firs ank expression was tending as if by an irresistible affinity wards this shade of sentiment; *Autumn* was already th ost seductive of *The Seasons*. The night motive had been ready sketched by Lady Winchilsea (*Nocturnal Reverie*) and arnell (*Night-piece on Death*). Two years before the publi ition of the *Night Thoughts*, Joseph Warton,[1] destined with is brother Thomas to shake the critical dogmatism upon hich classicism rested,[2] wrote an awkward, naïve poem ommonplace in form, but raised by a rough and sincere in piration, *The Enthusiast; or, The Lover of Nature*. The poin which Thomson had stopped is now passed; love and desir oar impetuously towards the great stretches of wild nature nd a whole programme of poetic revival shapes itself ou rough the liberty accorded to the exaltation of feeling nd this rapture draws its sustenance from dramatic visions om desolate moors where grow the yew and the sombre iniper tree; night, solitude, and meditation throw a funereal armony over this rugged setting. The spirit of Milton's *enseroso*, and not that of the *Allegro*, gives the tone to al his landscape literature of the eighteenth century.

But Young [3] is at the source itself of the current of religiou

[1] 1722–1800; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xviii.

[2] See below, Book IV, Chap. I, sect. 4.

[3] Edward Young, born in 1683, in Hampshire, was the son of a cleric, studie Oxford, threw in his lot with the Duke of Wharton, wrote tragedies (se ook II, Chap. IV, sect. 4), satires, which preceded those of Pope (*The Love o ame, the Universal Passion*, 1725–8), took orders (1727), and his various aim aving more or less fallen through, he was appointed to the modest living o Velwyn, where he ended his days in the expectation of a bishopric which neve ame. He had married the daughter of the Earl of Lichfield; a series of famil ereavements, together with the death of his wife, inspired *The Complaint, o ight Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1741–5), the success of whic as very great. He died in 1765. His *Conjectures on Original Compositio*

melancholy associated with problems of death and destiny; or at least, at the source of the literature which diverts into secretly complacent expressions forces of energy that the old Puritanism used to discharge in spiritual torments and in acts of will.[1]

stringently demand from a writer an explanation of all his moods, can search in his life for the actual counterpart and so to speak the justification of each sob; the artist's personality is a world apart,
according to inc
which George E
the *Night Thoughts* with the interested worldliness of their author only discloses a secret weakness at the cost of some malignity. But it is none the less interesting to see, at the fountain-head of the Romanticism of grief, the artifice of an idealized and simplified attitude creating a kind of relative deception, which will be for Romanticism a vice analogous to that which for the classicists was the fictitious suppression of personality.

Self-expression with Thomson was still something discreet and indirect; with Young, self comes into the foreground. His work represents the real beginning of the literature of sensibility. Necessarily subjective in principle, it tends with all its might to bring about the overthrow of the barriers of intellectuality, measure, and order, as well as the general self-effacement, by which classicism limited, repressed, and transposed the troubled, impatient flow of the inner life.

Young provides an outlet for this tumultuous tide. But he does not let it pour forth freely. Just as much as with Thomson, his is a double temperament, which by culture is bound up with tradition, at the same time as instinct inclines it towards the future. The education of his art has been exclusively classical; the whole of his work belongs to the

(1759) make very liberal allowance for the originality of genius against rules. *Poetical Works*, Aldine edition, 1858. See G. Eliot, *Essays*, 1884; J Texte, *Rousseau et le Cosmopolitisme littéraire*, 1895, W. Thomas, *Le Poète Edward Young*, 1901.

[1] The fact must not be overlooked, however, that the success of *Pamela* in 1740 had popularized another expression of Puritan pathos. (See below, Chap. III, sect. 2.)

forms and spirit of the age of Pope. The powerful initiative of the *Night Thoughts* is wholly psychological by nature; the language, subservient to rules, is in no way renovated. The signs of a weakening inspiration, of a style that is cut off from its vital roots, the abstraction, the false and merely verbal intensity, come to spoil at every minute his most vigorous accents. An imperious discipline weighs upon his expression, contracting it, concentrating it, and giving to his poem an extreme and often obscure terseness; while on the other hand the discontinuity of thought is seen in the absence of any plan, and produces incessantly the impression of jerkiness, of themes taken up again, and of a broken line of development.

The *Night Thoughts* are a long meditation in nine cantos. Three successive bereavements have darkened the poet's soul; the nocturnal hours are in keeping with his sorrow; pensive and alone he abandons himself to the reflections it suggests; and it is a whole treatise on life, death, and immortality which thus issues from a personal emotion, displayed as it is beneath a light veil of reticence; the modesty of private life is still too strong, and so fictitious names serve to designate those who have died. The development is more than didactic; it is controversial. The inconstancy and illusion of human happiness, the illogicalness of infidelity, the fecund certitudes of faith, such are the very orthodox doctrines that Young demonstrates with untiring zeal. An imaginary interlocutor lends a surface animation to his monologue. Through this rather pale personage, who seems to represent the spirit of the century, it is against the error of moral flippancy that Young raises the protestation of experience and good sense; and it is in the name of reason that he upholds a rational thesis. The departed are evoked, one after another; a fund of bitterness felt everywhere confirms the sincerity of the Christian pessimism which is expressed; the lyrical setting of night and death is never allowed to be forgotten; but the poem has only at moments the character of an effusion; it is a series of religious commonplaces and philosophical debates.

In this way it belongs to the family of reasoned arguments in verse which classicism extolled, and so differs in no way by its nature from Pope's *Essay on Man*. The wholly intellectual aridness of the discussion is not redeemed by the utilitarian quality, at bottom prosaic, of the ethics taught; it is increased by a language that is most often abstract, an

elliptical syntax, and an awkwardness of expression. The nervous condensation alone of the idea sustains the interest through the impression of mental energy which it continually creates, and the very effort that it demands from the reader.

And yet, this very classical work has drawn to itself,

operate in brief moments of escape. It opens up on the material night of the physical world, on the darkness that enshrouds destiny, on the mysterious beyond, perspectives that have all the profoundness of Christianity. A Miltonian sublimity raises it at times as if on a sudden spread of wing. An age that was weary of optimism and reason was attracted by the strange sweetness of despair, but its principles still

cause of Young's success. The faith passively practised by indolent minds contained within it the power to move, to communicate tragic thrills; to Young it was given to actualize and spread the contagion of these imaginative stirrings. He was not a creator, but an eloquent popularizer; and has his place among religious orators.

That is to say, he is not only a rhetorician. The com-

as elsewhere, by passionate feeling. The images thus in-

themselves out into formulae and proverbs, if not enigmas, but which also at times flash the most vivid illuminations upon the reader. And his line, jerky and stiff as it is, has an energy of touch, and sharp breaks of a powerful effectiveness.

There is scarcely any landscape work in the *Night Thoughts*; nature is limited to a central setting, and some comparisons. But because of the affinity of the inner sentiment, Young's influence was immediately confounded with that of the descriptive poets. The set of romantic themes which is now being created is henceforth enlarged by nocturnal meditation and by pessimistic or religious melancholy, which associate themselves with stirring picturesque visions. Very extensive on the Continent, this action is to be felt in England among all those whose temperament is not rebellious to the sensibility that is awakening.

The immediate echo of the *Night Thoughts* is to be heard in Blair,[1] whose poem offers the same commonplace ideas, an expression at times no less vigorous, together with the signs of a Puritan gravity that is more simple and less mixed with philosophical pretensions; and that already, in a naïve way, intensifies the use of the outer means destined to arouse funereal terrors. In a declamatory prose, which did not seem such to countless readers, James Hervey [2] also gives expression to identical emotions and thoughts; despite the difference of the form he adopts, he cannot be separated from this literary group.

With other writers, the particular theme with which Young is definitely associated is decidedly in the foreground, although it is not the dominant inspiration. Of such is Thomas Warton,[3] whose early poem translates in an impetuous language the fusion which a flight of sensibility achieves between the 'pleasures' of nature and those of 'melancholy.'

One could further connect with this group the expressions of a poetry of religious sentiment verging, either towards mysticism as in John Byrom,[4] the disciple of Law, who wrote a 'poetical essay' in praise of 'enthusiasm'; or towards an instinctive symbolism, as in Christopher Smart,[5] whose *Song to David* is a strange masterpiece, of a striking and somewhat

[1] Robert Blair, 1699–1746; *The Grave*, 1743; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xv.

[2] James Hervey, 1714–58. His *Meditations among the Tombs*, 1745–7, reached its 25th edition before the end of the century.

[3] 1728–90; *The Pleasures of Melancholy*, written in 1745, published in 1747.

[4] 1692–1763; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xv.

[5] 1722–70; *A Song to David*, 1763; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xvi.

disturbing imaginative intensity, with moments of ecstatic

common background of elegiac melancholy, and with whom this spontaneity at times creates accents of a relatively simpler language.[2]

4. *Imagination: the Past, Ruins.*—After sentiment has interwoven itself with the nature of everyday surroundings, then with the sombre dramatic aspects of human destiny as well

contribution. The deepest stirrings of the soul are those which it creates out of its own substance.

The objects capable of awakening these inner reactions are

is ill-satisfied with the present. A period of psychological transition will necessarily reveal this character. The rebirth of sentiment springs from an instinctive desire for renovation and moral refreshment; it tends to re-exercise spiritual faculties that have been slumbering The obscure belief of having formerly experienced their constant and beneficial activity is an essential element of the knowledge that this age has of itself. The intuition on the one hand of an impoverishment of the national soul, brought about by a century of exclusive rationalism, and on the other, of the necessity to return to former modes of being, the actual memory of which still pulsates and throbs in the life of these times, such is the general condition of English sensibility which is daily becoming more pronounced, and the progress of which is the main support of the change in literature.

These former modes of sensibility are projected by the present into a vague past, and associated with all that is

[1] 1748–88; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xviii.

[2] See for example the *Ode written in a Visit to the Country in Autumn.*

distant, different, contrary—with all that classicism was accustomed to despise. The years of romance when the chivalrous spirit of the novels of adventure held sway, the Gothic times when faith built the great cathedrals, in a word the whole of the Middle Ages, shine with a sovereign attraction. To bring their image back again, is to resuscitate the sentiments which animated them, is to revive them, and with them oneself. Thus the mental rhythm was already inclining hearts towards the past; it called for a vast recommencement; and the relics of the nation's past come to have a privileged place among the influences which imagination most willingly obeys.

These relics are in the first place the buildings of antiquated style, anterior to the Renascence, and to the architectural taste imitated from the ancients. The subconscious reaction against classicism conceives a love for the Gothic, and this epithet, which only recently was still an opprobrium, now by degrees becomes a term of pious affection. In particular, the ruins of monuments left to themselves and almost forming a part of nature appeal, not only to the feeling for the past, but to that of the picturesque as to that of landscape; the success in literature of the old abbeys is plainly seen before the middle of the century; they win first place in the favour of the poets before the castles and all the appurtenances of feudalism have their turn.

Not less full of this spirit of the Past are the legends and popular traditions. Their value lies in a naïve simplicity of character which contradicts the artificial refinement of pseudo-classical art; their rhythmic forms, and above all the ballads, will rank among the most forceful of the excitants of pre-Romanticism. But the prestige of fashionable and polished literature keeps this awakening sympathy in the background; at a slightly later date it will force itself into prominence.

A speedier victory comes to the national writers, from Chaucer to Milton, whose fame from 1660 onwards had suffered a partial eclipse, and who despite the discipline of their form appear to offer, as against the classical models, a lesson in independence. Already before 1750 the tragic appeal of Shakespeare is almost universally admired; Milton benefits by all the revival of respect, if not of zeal, which the middle class shows to Puritan austerity, and the versification of his great poems is an example that is more and more copied.

But it is Spenser's wealth of imagination which perhaps excites the keenest enthusiasm among the innovators.

everywhere recognizable, will scarcely flourish on a large scale until towards the last three decades of the century, but already at the time of Gray its attraction is being felt, chiefly in the form of a Northern or Scandinavian ideal, which by opposing the Latin and French pole of classical influences marks with increasing distinctness an artistic and moral conflict in progress. The magnetism of this new force of inspiration is due no doubt to the fact that certain hidden elements of the national originality are gradually becoming alive to their own existence.

These diverse themes call forth and beget one another; they tend to form an organic whole; they constitute, at the very

look upon a Collins or a Gray as the most complete representative, at this provisional stage, of the poetry of sentiment.

Their work shows us the fusion of the successive themes

this diffused quality that we can define the new contribution of this last group to a movement which in other respects they only illustrate as a whole.

The illustration, if one may so term it, is as yet imperfect, held in check by the resistance of an accepted literary tradition. The poetical fecundity of wonder accompanied with emotion does not wholly reveal itself, for this sentiment is far from attaining its full intensity. But within the limits of an art which a persisting classicism renders sober, and of which it also in a way paralyses the expression, one can already perceive the mental foundation of the coming literature: it is a group of tendencies organized round a central aspiration which makes for a return to an anti-intellectual and older type of inner life, a type which is felt to be more truly and more spontaneously national.

5. *Collins, Gray, etc.*—The poetry of Collins [1] is of rare and precious quality. His work is small, being prematurely and tragically interrupted. It is unequal, still encumbered by passive habits and formal conventions; the effort of a young and fresh inspiration upon a classical language and classical methods gives to his expression, on the other hand, something strained and at times obscure. But he infuses new life into the ode; and without leaving the contemporary plane of poetry, he re-creates it by the fervour of his genius in lyrical moments of perfect sweetness.

If his flights are weighted down by a matter that is heavy or dead, the reason is that invention with him has to work in an artificial setting. He does not claim freedom of choice in his subjects, the tradition of the Pindaric ode forces itself upon him; and although he retains only the more summary elements, and constructs stanzas that are for the most part regular and

[1] William Collins, born at Chichester in 1721, of a middle-class commercial family, studied at Oxford, and displayed a certain restlessness of character, the sign perhaps already of mental instability; published while yet at the university his *Persian Eclogues* (1744); then came his *Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer on his Edition of Shakespeare's Works*, 1743. Renouncing a Church career, he decided to be a poet, dreamed of the theatre, of historical works, of a translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*; in 1747 appeared the *Odes on Several Descriptive and Allegorical Subjects*, and the death of Thomson drew from his pen another ode (1749). Discouraged by public indifference and material worries, he was saved from penury by a legacy in 1749, but fell a victim to nervous depression which, at moments, bordered on insanity. He died in 1759, leaving behind an unfinished ode *On the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands, etc.*, published in 1788. *Poems*, ed. by Stone, 1907; see also *Poetical Works, with Memoir*, ed. by Moy Thomas (Aldine Poets), 1892; ed. W. C. Bronson, 1898; *Poetical Works of Gray and Collins*, ed. by A. Lane Poole, 1918; *Poems*, ed. by E. Blunden, 1929. See study by H. W. Garrod, 1929.

simple, yet he does not dare to give himself up to the pure effusion which his temperament craved for. And so his lines are laden with allegories, while he personifies abstractions without ceasing. His style is not immune from dross, such as banal epithets, false elegance, traces of a pseudo-philosophical vocabulary intended to heighten the idea by means of a generality and a nobility that are wholly exterior.

But the dominant impression is that of a vital sincerity. The odes of Collins are full of a diffuse feeling for nature; he looks up to Thomson with affection and respect; his evocations of landscapes are brief, and he does not seek them out for themselves; they only offer a harmonious setting for the idea and the emotion. The atmosphere of melancholy pervades

that is both verse (*Ode to*

He has these elements in common with others. His most

contact, in sympathy with Joseph and Thomas Warton; his

very imperfect attempts in verse.

his hallucinated, almost morbid, mind. It is here that at his epoch he stands without a rival. And this unique quality is not found above all in the *Ode to Fear*—where it is directly expressed—despite the strangeness of certain accents, and the bold impressionism which translates a vague sense of terror by means of happily chosen correspondences of images and sounds; but in the pure masterpieces, and supremely in the *Ode to Evening*, the most delicately exquisite of eighteenth-century poems; where a pensive colouring, rich in subdued, restrained vibrations, spread out over the landscape as over the meditative mind that contemplates it, fuses in so harmonious a manner the charm of twilight, the paling lights, the oncoming silence and gloom, all that the hour holds of happy and foreboding intent, into one suggestion of a mysterious eloquence.

Here again the language is learned, wholly steeped in literary memories, but of a natural spontaneous grace; and the classical instrument is handled with a subtlety of feeling that is quite modern. It is in this way that Collins has at times rejuvenated the form of poetry; a very fine sense of word values, a musical perception of their expressive force, give them an appropriateness, a freshness, a force of suggestion, that seem to renew them. He has in a pure inspiration the supreme gift of simplicity; it is not yet the simplicity at once moral and verbal of Wordsworth; Collins's vocabulary remains laboured, and the *Ode to Simplicity* does not fulfil all its promise. But where this classicism is perfect, it is sufficiently spiritualized by an inner youthfulness of spirit to rejoin Romanticism in its moments of soberness. The rhythms are adapted to the sentiment with a very sure intuition, which presages the freedom of the future. And even allegory with Collins takes on a new aspect; his personifications do not remain abstract; he enlivens them with an imaginative vitality that is happily and delicately shaded, lends them traits he has borrowed from reality, and shows them in movement and action. Through selection and tact, his descriptive and psychological art succeeds in creating a beauty that is strong, original, and fine, although a trifle difficult.

Gray [1] is closely allied to Collins, and yet differs from him.

[1] Thomas Gray, born in London, in 1716, was the son of a broker, studied at Eton, then came to Cambridge where he spent most of his life as a scholar in semi-seclusion, at Peterhouse and Pembroke. In 1739–41 he travelled on the Continent with Horace Walpole, admired the Alps, and visted the Grande Chartreuse. His first poem dates from 1742; *An Elegy Written in a Country*

Fate has decreed that he should be seen in the perspective of his rival, whom he overshadowed during his lifetime, but whose lyrical quality he does not quite equal.

Gray is also a transitional poet; but not in the same way. With Collins a new inspiration actually reconciles itself, although not always happily, with modes of thought and expression of former times; these contrary elements are not reduced to unity; there subsists something unsettled, and some want of balance. With Gray the groups of tendencies are not in the same relationship; one of them, incontestably, imposing its law upon the other. Gray's talent is primarily disciplined A scrupulous artist, conscientious and delicate in the extreme, his desire was to realize, in all he wrote, both the harmony of tone and the perfection of form.

He therefore obeyed the dominant preoccupation of a laboured art; and as such an effort demands the mastery of self, a lucid attention, the care of detail, it would not be contrary to t[illegible]
and truth of [illegible]
abounds in [illegible]
animated by [illegible]
rejuvenation of literature. To this yet obscure work, it has contributed as much as any other. But it is revolutionary with a wise prudence that, far from denying the established order of things, rather upholds it, and even prolongs it into the innovations of the future.

So remarkable is the stamp of this character upon his verse, that one might recognize in it an intermediary art, a mixed and perhaps a true classicism. The slender inspiration of Gray has produced some exquisite fruits; because, already

g from the rise of the new sap, it retains the benefit f a learned and refined culture. The reasoning aridness of lassical poetry is here, by an inner progress, enriched and ade more mellow; the luxuriance and uncertainty of Roman- cism are neutralized in advance by the authority of choice d taste, that still remains sovereign. A poetry such as this akes one feel what is lacking in the excessive intellectuality the age of Pope; by mastering and sublimating emotional pulses in a sober form, it approximates, both in spirit and letter, to an ideal classicism, one that would represent ipline without impoverishment; it suggests the memory he masterpieces which have seemed at times to achieve distinction.

Gray belongs the honour of recalling, in certain of his ts, the delicate and fine felicity of a Virgil or a Racine. he perspective would be false that would place him, as an ic and supreme genius, almost at the summit of English y. Critics fond above all of measure and balance, lik ew Arnold, may have crushed him under such an honour es not possess the necessary creative force to fuse to- the contrary impulses of Romantic spontaneity and l lucidity, without lowering the standard of either, ile sustaining both at their highest possible pitch; the psychological effort of such a synthesis is beyond him. ray's art does not dominate the conflict of tendencies; a choice and takes a side; he clearly settles down with ds of discipline and order. Only at brief intervals is a conciliator; and he purchases this noble ambition, se successes, at the cost of semi-sterility.

k, however small it be, is divided into two unequal ost of these short poems are occasional com- in accordance with the type bequeathed to the century by the Restoration; they range from light se to the Pindaric ode; develop commonplaces, allegories, and personify all the virtues and all the irst sight, therefore, the matter would appear to e than artificial and mediocre; and indeed the ot without bearing the marks of a thought that eral and abstract, and of a search for an elegance ch too many precursors had opened the way. style, in his least personal moments, is never lways saved from pure passivity by a concern and accuracy; it has always at least a surface

olish. To this negative quality is most often added an inner istinction; and at times, a compactness, a force of energy, which lend an inevitable character to the expression. Gray bounds in striking passages; to more than one idea he has iven its definitive perfection. The close attention to the hastened merit of the form is further evidenced in a very areful construction, and in an exquisite sense of proportion nd order.

And this extremely attentive art guides a sincere inspiraion without stifling it. Whatever the theme, Gray knows ow to vest it with the grace of true sensibility. His visions f nature are discreet, pretty rather than fresh and new; ut if in his poetry he is hardly the disciple of Thomson, he is immediate harmony with the school of Young. Melancholy with him is something constitutional; his note of tenderness as a winning sweetness. And his imagination is active; it lelights [illegible] ves the hidden elations [illegible] classical poetry ontains [illegible], and suggestion which foreshadow Romanticism; he has discovered rhythms, itilized the power of sounds, and even created evocations. The triumph of this sensibility allied to so much art is to be seen in the famous *Elegy*, which from a somewhat reasoning [illegible]

The other group is connected with researches and disquietudes hat are more consciously innovating. There is in Gray a vein f erudition and archaeology; he was one of the first to feel he attraction of the Middle Ages and of Scandinavian ntiquity. At the British Museum, which had just been pened, he read old texts; he dreamed of a history of English poetry, which Thomas Warton was destined to write *The Bard*, and especially *The Fatal Sisters* and *The Descent of Odin*, composed before the publication of Percy's collection, re, as it were, soundings taken in the ocean of medieval uperstition, of primitive legends and beliefs, of simple and opular wonders, the depth and fecundity of which were about o be gradually revealed. The part played by the refrain in he first two pieces, the rough conciseness of the last, are rtistic intuitions remarkable at this date.

All this is of rather slender bulk. But there is, in addition,

a man in Gray, whom only his letters disclose in his entir
Here one enjoys the charm of a real spontaneousness,
is witty without effort; of an affectionate nature, made
friendship; susceptible, as well, to the comic side of thi
free from any Puritan narrowness, and on the look out for
picturesque trait; nervous, and one would like to
feminine, endowed with a lovable and simple grace; in
wise insular, but fashioned by travel and study, open to
appreciation of French classics as well as to an inquisi
taste for the archaic and the Gothic. The literary opin
of which these letters are full form one of their princ
attractions. Above all, they give to the feeling for landsc
a franker and more complete expression than that whic
found in the poems; and one is astonished to read, at a
so early as 1739, about the sublimity of the Alps, and
religious horror of high mountains, effusions which outdist
the stage marked by Thomson in the progress towards
love of wild nature. The diary of the journey to the Eng
lake district, thirty years later, is full of an intelligent
precise passion for the nobility and austerity of the hori
that Wordsworth was later to love. The modernity of t
impressions is surprising; but they retain a soberness of
even in the noting of the most indeterminate flights of
soul, which is the especial mark of Gray.

After Collins and Gray must be mentioned poets of
talent, in whom there dominates such or such an elemen
their complex inspiration. A first group would be formed
Shenstone and Jago,[1] whose most characteristic trait is a
of nature that is realistic and at the same time tender.

Not that Shenstone is a man of one theme only; he t
his hand at many, without ever finding himself decisiv
None of his contemporaries better shows us the abso
inability of feeling at this date to renew the means of exp
sion. *The Schoolmistress* is a piece of playfulness, begun
an intention of irony, and of which the subject has by deg
won over the poet's sympathy; for if there is humour in Sh
stone, and a verve that is at times broad, there is a
greater fund of sentimentalism. But his imitation of Spen
suggested by a sincere admiration, ends in a rather awkw

[1] William Shenstone, 1714–63; *The Schoolmistress*, 1742; *Poetical Works*
by Gilfillan, 1854; see study by E. M. Purkiss, 1931. Richard Jago, 1715
Edge-Hill, or The Rural Prospect Delineated and Moralized, 1767; *Po*
Chalmers, vol. xiii.

pastiche. His taste for rusticity foreshadows Cowper and Wordsworth through some of its intuitive aspects; he beautifies his country retreat of the Leasowes with innumerable artificial ornaments, without losing his susceptibility to the power of free nature; nor is his *Pastoral Ballad* devoid of descriptive grac
and desires it: :
diction and his
the trash of a degenerate classicism. . . .

There is still much convention, but at the same time more true spontaneity, in his friend and correspondent, Jago, a country pastor, who describes to us in four books the landscape as it appears at four successive periods of the day from the same hill-top (*Edge-Hill*). This poem of a moralizing character, written in a nerveless blank verse, is bathed by a fresh welling inspiration, the love of the soil, of familiar horizons; and

revived feeling for nature can be seen, commingling with the zeal for the archaic, the medieval imagination. The first is frankly an imitator, who, when he follows Gray, is only mediocre; but when it is Spenser whom he takes as his model, he touches chords of a rather happy although frankly modern note. The second, to-day forgotten, owes to the national subject which he treated in his *Douglas* one of the greatest successes in drama of the century; his declamatory dialogues leave his play the merit of action, and above all that of poetry.

Finally, the poems of Goldsmith,[2] which won the praise of Gray, have remained popular, for their inspiration, which

of a swift and unforeseen industrial change. Here again the newly acquired tenderness of the poetry does not break the paralysing spell that holds the language fast. But Goldsmith had in him the natural instinct of an elegiac rhythm,

[1] W. J. Mickle, 1735–88; *Sir Martyn, a Poem in the Manner of Spenser*, 1767; *Poems*, Chalmers, vol. xvii. John Home, 1722–1808; *Douglas*, 1756

[2] See below, Chap. III, sect. 3. *The Traveller*, 1764; *The Deserted Village*, 1770.

and he knew how to harmonize the cadence of his verse w the emotion which he proposed to call forth.

To be consulted: Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Eightee Century*, 1899; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chaps. V, VI, V X; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. v, 1905; O. Doughty, 'The Engli Malady of the Eighteenth Century' (*Review of English Studies*, July 1926 Farley, *Scandinavian Influences on the English Romantic Movement*, 190 Gosse, *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, 1889; idem, *Gray* (Englis Men of Letters), 1887; R. Haferkorn, *Gotik und Ruine in der englischen Dichtun des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 1924; R. D. Havens, *The Influence of Milto on English Poetry*, 1922; H. G. de Maar, *A History of Modern English Roman ticism. I—Elizabethan and Modern Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century* 1925; E. W. Manwaring, *Italian Landscape in Eighteenth Century England*, 1925; R. Martin, *Essai sur Thomas Gray*, 1934; Millar, *The Mid-Eighteenth Century*, 1902; Morel, *James Thomson*, 1895; Mornet, *Le Sentiment de la Nature en France de Rousseau à Bernardin de Saint-Pierre*, 1907; Morton, 'The Spenserian Stanza in the 18th Century' (*Modern Philology*, January 1913); E. Partridge, *Eighteenth Century English Romantic Poetry*, 1924; Phelps, *The Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement*, 1893; A. L. Reed, *The Background of Gray's Elegy*, 1924; Myra Reynolds, *The Treatment of Nature in English Poetry between Pope and Wordsworth*, 1912; Seccombe, *The Age of Johnson*, 1900; Thomas, *Le Poète Edward Young*, 1901; Van Tieghem, *La Poésie de la Nuit et des Tombeaux en Europe au XVIIIe siècle*, 1921.

CHAPTER III

THE NOVEL OF SENTIMENT

1. *The Middle-class Spirit and the Novel.*—The novel of the time of Johnson is renewed in a more efficient and more [illegible]

has carried to a high degree of perfection; it puts up a very strong resistance to the desire for innovation, and only accepts the change in inspiration by veiling it in a customary and persistent style of writing. On the contrary, the novel is a still amorphous kind; if its first sources lie in the distant past, it only now reaches its full growth; even with Defoe it has not completed its development. New matter can all the better accommodate itself to this elastic framework, as prose is a mode of expression of unlimited suppleness.

Above all, there is a deep affinity between the dominant instincts of the middle classes and this branch of literature, the possibilities of which have remained intact. It lends itself better than any other to morality and sentiment. After having formerly represented allegorical or ideal visions, it tends more and more to become a picture of life. The middle-class mind would have this picture real, because it has a firm hold upon reality, and cannot break itself away from it. Thus realism will come to find its most favourable field in the novel. But a real picture will arouse the same vital reactions as life itself; it will beget a mood of reflectiveness applied to conduct, and will tell upon the resolution to behave well; it will be animated by moralizing intentions; and in order to set these working, it will have recourse to feelings.

Nothing is therefore more natural than to see one of the creators of the modern English novel, Richardson, seeking his inspiration in Puritan sentimentalism. He has hardly written, ere realism, treating itself in its turn as an end, sets up against his example an example that is openly contradictory; from this reaction there issues a movement, and Fielding also had a following. But the sentimental novel continues to develop, and after having furnished a convenient expression for the

desire to soften hearts with a view to edifying, it will come, in the work of a Sterne, to satisfy the quest of a voluptuous gratification in the seeking after emotion for its own sake.

2. *Richardson.*—Richardson [1] is not less than Defoe a representative of the average middle class. It is not only the semi-aristocratic class of rich merchants, but that of the traders and artisans, who find in him their spokesman. Thus another and a decisive step is taken towards the conquest of literature by the original instincts of the British nation; if the mass by far the most numerous, the common people, is still excluded from exercising any influence in the domain of letters, the social groups whose thought from now onwards makes itself felt are in immediate contact with this mass, and share its main inspirations. The surroundings from which Richardson comes are already very similar to those from which Dickens will come.

It is from this national and almost plebeian sap that he
raws all his strength. This innovator did not deliberately
ish to be an artist. No one has ever created a new form, or
aced upon a form in course of development a stamp of
ished realization, with surer intuition and less lucidity.
e subject-matter of Richardson's novels is impersonal; it
the permanent fund of Puritan tradition, brought again to
ht by the combined action of the moral rhythm and social
ses. The impulse to write in this case is nothing else than
need of explaining an edifying theme; without going further
k than the modern age inaugurated by the reign of Charles
he allegory of Bunyan, the essay of Steele, and the novel
efoe had all represented, in various ways, the successive

muel Richardson, born in Devon in 1689, was the son of a joiner, followed
nily to London, received a simple education and was apprenticed to a
, whose daughter he married, set up in business for himself and was
sful. The compiling of a collection of model letters for the various
ns of life led him to write his first novel, *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*
the success of which was immediate. Then appeared *Clarissa, or
tory of a Young Lady* (1747–8); and *The History of Sir Charles
on* (1753–4). His reputation brought him into contact with social
erary circles, and he made many feminine friendships. He pub-
vo collections of maxims or meditations taken from his novels, and
1761, leaving a voluminous correspondence (ed. by Mrs. Barbauld,
Novels, ed. by L. Stephen, 1883; with *Life* by Phelps, 1901–3. *Familiar
c.*, ed. by B. W. Downs, 1929. See Diderot, *Éloge de Richardson*, 1761;
, *Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire*, 1895; Schmidt,
n, *Rousseau und Goethe*, 1875; biographies and studies by C. Thomson,
Dobson (English Men of Letters), 1902; Canby, 'Pamela Abroad'
Language Notes, vol. xviii. 1903); study by B. W. Downs. 1929; P.
931.

sentimentalism, allied to the utilitarian concern in matters of

who is led

blem as to

what models Richardson could have followed remains obscure;

not to be drawn to it by a natural bent.

planation, the example of *Gil Blas* or of *Marianne* was not necessary in order to incite Richardson to adhere closely to a *detailed view of things, or to situate the greater part of his* plot among the lower classes of society. Realism can have

class thought, from an attention directed towards facts by a

[1] For the affirmative thesis see G. C. Macaulay, *Modern Language Review*, viii (4th October 1913), and for the negative, R. S. Crane, *Modern Philology*, vol xvi, January 1919; *Modern Language Review*, January 1922.

for which the least important details of the setting wherein enacted the destiny of a soul owe an infinite value to such stake, and to the influence that they are able to exert upon t event.

This art of description, therefore, only converges in appea ance with one of the directions which the principle of classici could urge it to follow. As a matter of fact, the realism Richardson is not animated by the classical spirit, and mov away from it. Besides, it is very limited; in its sentimentalis it emphasizes certain elements of reality and neglects othe while in several essential respects it tends towards idealis As the material world interests it much less than souls, a only in the measure in which it inclines them to good or evil, the psychological analysis alone develops quite freel each cranny of the heart is sounded with the clear-sightedne of the moralist; and this would not in itself be contrary the main preoccupation of classical writers, if a set preferen of and search for the emotional feelings did not incline t analysis towards tenderness in pathos and edification, inste of towards clear understanding and knowledge. Similarl in place of the cynical crudeness towards which the coura of the intellectual searcher after truth was readily attracte we have here a taste that is severely docile—or that wants be so—to the rules of delicacy.

At bottom, these rules are not fully respected; and this is t effect of a creation that has been stimulated by a vigoro instinct, and in which the element of the subconscious ac and reveals itself with relative independence. The account Pamela's long struggle against a violence which at tim becomes singularly definite is not of an irreproachable mor quality. And the lesson itself of the book is ambiguous, soon as one leaves the extremely simple conventions of sermonizing psychology. The virtue of the heroine resembl too closely a calculated skilfulness for the reader not to pe ceive the secret which she hides from herself. In constructing th personage, Richardson was guided by the irresistible intuiti of the organic whole which constitutes character; unknowingl he has given her the implicit utilitarian qualities of a Purit temperament devoid of nobleness. The clear thinking, t cleverness, the trickery even which Pamela displays ever where else, exclude the possibility of an innocence either co plete or fully disinterested. Another excess, where is reveal an artificial morality, imposed upon human nature like so

rigid constraint, and claiming to reduce it all to a
fallible effort, is that of Sir Charles Grandison, who h
the symbol of the pedantry of perfection.

The ethics of *Clarissa Harlowe* are on a higher p

sincere enough to veil the cherished hope of sup
rewards. The idealism of sorrow attains an almo

as in *Pamela* it is concentrated in the duel between
wills—if one passes over the additional and rather
story of Pamela's married bliss.

Richardson's talent is made for this austere conc
of interest, which recalls the sermon and the religious
the more complicated plot of *Sir Charles Grandison*
comparison to be loose and less strong. It is thr
unity of the emotion that *Clarissa Harlowe* preserves

son's triumph in literature.

Along with the sombre dramatic force of Purita
art has also its very keen desire for spiritual clear-sig

The light which Richardson throws upon the deep

Among the most interesting moments in his work are those in which the artist and the psychologist, escaping from the tutelage of the moralist, actually come to recover their independence, if they do not claim it. The characters in these novels are conceived with the object of serving an action; any importance, any individual life they may receive outside of this rigorous end in view constitute a breach of the law of their existence. Now Richardson has in him a pure faculty of artistic creation, by which at times he has allowed himself to be carried away. Through the effect of a logic that has then been freed from all constraint, his personages acquire the fullness, the consistency, the picturesque particularity, of a realism which is no longer that of moral purpose, but of concrete truth or aesthetic intensity.

That Lovelace, whose figure of a seducer is exaggerated by a kind of Satanic perversity, should develop into a superhuman creature, and the symbol of a divided soul in which evil triumphs, has in itself nothing which can yet wound the Puritan principles of the author; and it is the religious imagination which here destroys the sense of the real. But elsewhere, reality itself is enforced at the expense of the simplicity demanded by an edifying art. Pamela is very much alive; she has some roguishness and coquetry; so that the naïveness of her innocence loses not a little thereby. A finer and more supple notion of feminine purity, on the contrary, permits Clarissa and her friend to show a piquant naturalness, without losing anything either in dignity or in likelihood. The vigour of touch with which are drawn some of the secondary figures, such as Mrs. Jewkes or the parents of Clarissa, is derived from a searching after effects of a distinctly literary order—a happy aim indeed. But the character of Charlotte Grandison is of too pleasing a spontaneity, too free and too irreverent, not to destroy the general tonality indispensable to the prestige of the hero. One might say that Richardson, obsessed by Fielding's success, has here wanted to rival the latter's verve, just as Fielding in his turn allowed himself to imitate the other's pathos. The artist has been successful, but not without compromising the unity of emotion and doctrine in which the moralist and the novelist have each wanted to put the best of themselves.

The epistolary form, at first adopted without any deliberate choice, then retained by preference, has its drawbacks; it inclines to prolixity and repetition—the novels of Richardson

are interminable; it does not allow of the simplicity of one unique outlook, entails the elimination of certain aspects of

probability; and on several occasions Richardson has to replace

a 'journal.' But

ete exposition, it

of inner analysis,

and by always allowing the account of the facts to be seen through a sensibility, it lends itself wonderfully to a plot that is coloured by emotion. On the other hand, by distributing the vision of things among several distinct points of view, it tends to a relativist philosophy that confronts and reconciles the diverse personal equations of parallel experiences. This tendency will develop in the *Humphry Clinker* of Smollett; it is already in evidence in Richardson, and limits the subjectivism of his sentimental method of expression.

The artist in him thus has his own power, and his own merits The style, conscientious and slightly self-conscious, suggests that the writer is persevering rather than gifted; but the language has precision, energy, and at times a certain raciness.

The moral and literary figure of Richardson would not be complete, if one did not look for it all in the story of his life; and his correspondence, a trifle sermonizing but full of interest, remains the best image of this. He should be pictured as filling soberly, or with a serious playfulness, his part of adviser, of confessor almost, with his friends of both sexes; finding delight in the society of his lady admirers, reading out his works to them, giving them his opinion on all the details of their existence; candidly practising his ethics and his sentimentalism; and on the whole, despite rather frequent traces of narrowness or morbidity, maintaining without too

sincerity.

The influence of Richardson in Europe is an important chapter of comparative literature. In France, in Germany, and in all the countries in which the contagion of sentimentalism is awakening, he has favoured it with all the force of his pathos. Diderot was enthusiastic in his praise of the

author of *Clarissa Harlowe*; Rousseau was indebted to him for the general inspiration of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*; and the *Werther* of Goethe in certain respects is part of his spiritual posterity.

3. *Goldsmith*: '*The Vicar of Wakefield.*'—The success of the sentimental novel is deep and lasting; but Richardson does not immediately find a continuator worthy to succeed him. His influence is mixed with a spirit rather different from his in the work of the sister of his great rival, Sarah Fielding,[1] whose *David Simple* is the naïve and moralizing account, at once realistic and emotional, of the journey of an upright soul through life. The *Peter Wilkins* of Robert Paltock[2] inclines sentimentalism strangely in the direction of a fanciful liberty of imagination.

With brilliant success the novel of Goldsmith,[3] *The Vicar of Wakefield*, renews the inspiration of sentiment, by bringing it nearer to the average human being, and by delivering it from a Puritan tension against which many temperaments will remain rebellious.

The pathos of Richardson really gave expression to the deepest needs of his own nature; but this expression remained indirect and veiled. With Goldsmith, the particular quality of a soul is more directly revealed; sentimentalism more clearly brings out the inner relation which makes it tend to the entire confession of the self. And it is first in this way

[1] 1710–68; *David Simple*, 1744.

[2] 1697–1767; *Peter Wilkins*, 1750; new edition, 1925.

[3] Oliver Goldsmith, born in Ireland (1728), the son of a vicar, spent his youth in poverty and difficulties; was destined for the church; then adopted medicine; travelled on the Continent, and after a few years of wandering life eked out a living still somewhat precarious, but full of hard work, as a writer in straitened circumstances and undertaking all sorts of tasks. While engaged in translations, critical articles, historical compilations, essays, etc., he published *An Enquiry into the Present State of Polite Learning in Europe*, 1759; edited a periodical, *The Bee*, 1759; collected 'Chinese Letters' under the title of *The Citizen of the World*, 1762. A poem, *The Traveller*, 1764, attracted sufficient notice to enable him to publish in 1766 a novel, written some four years earlier, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, which was poorly appreciated at first, but destined to universal fame. For the stage he wrote a comedy, *The Good-Natured Man*, 1768, and this was received with some favour; then he published a new poem, *The Deserted Village*, 1770; produced another comedy, *She Stoops to Conquer*, 1773, which was a great success. He died in 1774, a victim of overwork and financial worry. *Works*, ed. by Gibbs, 1885–6; *The Bee*, ed. by Dobson, 1903; *The Citizen of the World*, ed. by Dobson, 1891; *The Vicar of Wakefield*, ed. by Doble, 1909; *New Essays by Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. by R. S. Crane, 1927. See the biographies and studies by Dobson (Great Writers), 1888; R. A. King, 1910; F. F. Moore, 1910; A. L. Sells, *Les Sources françaises de Goldsmith*, 1921; H. J. Smith, *Oliver Goldsmith, Citizen of the World*, 1927.

that it becomes more human. But, again, the personality which pours itself forth is much more normal; it has greater variety, and better represents the diverse traits which ... mingle in the ...
tempers mora...
By virtue of ... Steele, develops and fixes the type of a genial cordiality, in the consciousness and search of which the best instincts of a composite people converge.

The link between the man and the ...

... resignation and humour against a contrary fate. Such indeed is the philosophy of the destiny which is here depicted to us. The incidents that cross it are borrowed more than once from the biography of Goldsmith; the peregrinations of his youth furnish ... episode ...
fic...
lo...
tr... by one who has a keen sense of situations, and here the playwright is recognizable; the first part abounds in pretty comedy scenes, while the second is more dramatic in colouring. The surroundings described are those with which the childhood of Goldsmith had made him familiar. He has put into his book his individual tastes, his political and social ideas. The tone of a charitable simplicity, attentive to the claims of the humble, which is also that of his own sensibility, is breathed from these pages in a manifold suggestion. This humanitarian note becomes even more precise in ...
again ...
of pr...
prefer... for the lower ranks, and the satire which Thackeray will level at the snob.

The ethics preached are not the ...
Richard...

... to the status of a doctrine and a rule finds the centre from which it will henceforth radiate over English life: *The Vicar of Wakefield* is the novel of the family and of the home.

*2 E

So wide, so constant, so universal is the hold of these themes over the emotions, that the book owes to them an unequalled popularity. It is the first masterpiece of domestic literature, which Steele had but hardly sketched. The reaction of simplicity against the artificial life and empty refinement of a frivolous or corrupt society here assumes its full character; without going as far in the field of doctrine as did Rousseau—whose ideas he recalls, and whose influence he slightly felt—Goldsmith teaches us, in fact, a kind of philosophy of nature. If he has no impassioned descriptions of landscape, he situates his novel in a setting of rustic freshness, and delights in calling forth the sweet pictures of country peace.

Thus one can perceive in Goldsmith the broad deep current that is leading to Romanticism. He has many of the inner feelings of which the new literature will be made up; he has even the retrospective trend of sensibility and imagination. Not only does he extol the moral purity of simple folks, but he finds pleasure in describing the archaic traits of peasant customs, exalts the touching beauty of the old popular ballads, which Percy had just brought back into vogue. He can intuitively discern what is dying and withering in the poetry of his time, and calls for a rejuvenation of form through the suppression of the well-worn epithet. His inspiration remains classical in its sly finesse, its sense of measure, its self-possession, its balance, and its humour; his language, of a true and charming spontaneousness, is, however, in the bondage of the verbal habits of the century; it tends to express itself in generalities, and is not devoid of a certain solemnity, redeemed for the pleasure of the reader by its artistic harmony with the professional seriousness of the hero.

Thus the book is connected in rather a complicated way with the realism that permeates the surrounding atmosphere. The working out of the materials borrowed from reality shows skill; the observation is sharp, and the satire often bold; the characters are painted with an exquisitely shaded, but at times cruel sense of truth, beneath the indulgence which envelops them; the vicar's wife is a personage of caustic comedy; a figure such as that of Thornhill, the seducer, is much closer to nature and life than that of Mr. B. in *Pamela*, and the sinner, in Goldsmith, shows himself to be more hardened. . . . But this clear-sightedness, devoid of illusion, is attentuated by the pleasing grace of an idyll; fanciful preconceptions, intentional improbabilities. a tender serenity, bathe us in an atmosphere

that is far removed from that in which critical realism usually has its being.

The Vicar of Wakefield opens up a fecund vein, and one which many future novelists will exploit: the middle-class dramas of poverty and pride, the conflict of pure values with social materialism. From this point of view, its lineage will be very numerous. It is for other reasons, however, that it has remained at the heart itself of English literature. It creates, not for the first time, but in its most average and representative form, a type in which certain of the deepest preferences of the British people will henceforth recognize themselves. The series of psychological traits, forming an organic whole, to the description of which tend not only the portrait of the vicar, but those of his circle, and the general teaching of the story, make up an attitude which one might define as a feeble utilitarian attention, an incomplete critical intelligence, a sincere moral scruple, a generous cordiality; and also innocent faults, some vanity, whims which give a

[illegible]

ness and disinterestedness. Perhaps, also, this last inclination, contradicted as it is by the strong practical instinct of the race, is appreciated because the average individual likes to find it in others. . . .

However that may be, Goldsmith's vicar is a moral figure of which English literature offers us many close or distant replicas. Before this date, his first lineaments appear in the work of the humorists of the Renascence and of the seventeenth century; Steele and Addison sketch his picture in Sir Roger de Coverley; Fielding develops it in Parson Adams; Sterne fills it out, in his 'Uncle Toby,' with incomparable precision of characteristics, but deflects it in a rather special direction. After Goldsmith, it reappears in the pages of Jane Austen, Walter Scott, Dickens, Thackeray. . . . In the fusing of naïve simplicity with natural goodness, the English instinct feels an invincible idealism of temperament, which *excludes the highest aims of the mind, but also all the meanness and coldness of the heart.* By its tenacious resistance to the irony and blows of fate, by its power of resilience, whole-

some illusion and self-forgetfulness, as by its faculty of moral originality and oddness, by its outlook curiously warped in some directions, by all that an obstinate whim can imply of heroism, this type represents a kind of obscure chivalric generosity, and one has been able to see in it the English and popular counterpart of Don Quixote.

4. *Sterne.*—The work of Sterne[1] is all made up of his personality. With him, the sentimental novel reaches the extreme limit of its principle. The barriers which with Richardson had opposed the display of self—Puritan repression, the desire to instruct, the craving for dramatic effects—here collapse of themselves; leaving only the unlimited exercise of a sensibility which expresses itself, and which carries along with it all the most individual elements of the inner being.

This absolute victory of sentiment is not without an influence upon its intimate quality. In becoming the guiding principle of inspiration, it enters into a full consciousness of its liberty and force; its close association with art must needs introduce into it some artifice. The sentimentalism of Sterne handles the means at its command with a virtuosity that supposes an inner division of the self, a complete mastery of the emotion by the devices employed. His humour, enriched by the supple play of a delectable and lucid originality, implies a detachment, a self-possession, in both cases unlimited. Thus an intellectuality, and with it a coldness, creep into the very heart of a literature which represents itself as animated by a communicative ardour. The inability to move feeling, just as to feel, will therefore be the danger that menaces this literature; and long before the advent of Romanticism, indeed as early as the next generation, it will reveal itself as undermined by the special rhetoric and morbid refinement of emotion.

[1] Laurence Sterne, born in 1713, great-grandson of an Anglican bishop, studied at Cambridge, took orders, and after having filled several posts, received an ecclesiastical living at York. He had only written some trifles when there appeared the first volumes of a novel, *Tristram Shandy* (1760, etc.; completed in 1767), which had an immediate success. Delicate in health, he made long stays in France and Italy (1762–4), published a second novel, *A Sentimental Journey*, and died the same year (1768). His *Letters* and *Sermons* form a considerable part of his work. *Works*, ed. by Saintsbury, 1894; ed. by Cross, 1904. *Tristram Shandy* and *A Sentimental Journey*, Temple Classics; *A Sentimental Journey*, ed. by H. Read, 1929. See Traill, *Sterne* (English Men of Letters), 1882; P. Stapfer, *Laurence Sterne*, 1870; Cross, *Life and Times of Sterne*, 1909, new edition, 1925; Sichel, *Sterne*, 1910; Melville, *Life and Letters of Sterne*, 1911; A. de Froe, *Laurence Sterne and his Novels, Studied in the Light of Modern Psychology*, 1925.

With Sterne himself, this decay does not fail to make itself already visible. The perfect detachment of the artist at least assures him a sovereign ease of manner; and the novel thus becomes, at a very early stage, a form of art that is completely autonomous, capable of receiving all the thought, all the fancy, all the person of a writer, and in a word all the intellectual life of an epoch. Such an elasticity singles it out from now onwards to be what it will become very soon: the

attitude such as that of Sterne; and consciousness or artifice does not exclude with him the sincerity of emotion. His sentiment was really part of his life; and a sufficient part, indeed, for him to know by experience its weakness and instability. His moral figure, one of the most curious in the

ture years of

nts, and the

The *Senti-mental Journey* refines the cult of emotion, and puts the finishing touch on its highly elaborate, artificial character, but in no way does it abjure this cult.

However strange his vocation may appear, when one thinks

intuitive and concrete knowledge of the laws of human nature, the basing of the rules of conduct upon the deep reality of instincts, serve as a support to a practical wisdom, with which the lessons of the Gospel are reconciled without too great difficulty The analysis of the secret movements of the heart

shows a remarkable finesse; and the clear-sightedness of the moralist is without illusion. An expert writer here exercises himself in the handling of rhetoric; the effects of emotion are prepared and developed with self-complacent skill; the style already has often the ample resources which it owes to a personal syntax; while the precision, the sureness of the general arrangement, confirm all that one feels of the spirit of conscious determination behind the absolute disorder of *Tristram Shandy*.

A constant, exacting, and ingenious pursuit of originality, such is the effort which sums up the intention of Sterne; the other ends he seeks—to amuse, to move the feelings, to instruct—are subordinated to this essential caprice which he raises to the dignity of a principle. To extract everything from one's own substance; to stimulate and unceasingly refresh the attention of the reader; to cast nothing in the ready-made moulds of thought or of expression—this is what he wants and what he claims to do. What is, no doubt, the capital scruple of a conscientious art—the fear of the mental automatisms to which laziness or fatigue will succumb—here becomes an exasperated and diseased worry; and this very exasperation gives rise to an unexpected mechanism. The literary figure of Sterne is that of a central inspiration marvellously supple and free, irradiating into diverse but connected forms, in which habit, devices, and almost mania everywhere manifest themselves.

Thus the variety of effects is very far from being infinite, and Sterne is constantly imitating himself. At least he never imitates anybody else, if one examines the substance of his work. No writer ever was more original, by the inner quality of his personality. Yet nothing is easier than to recognize in Sterne the traces of innumerable active suggestions. His genius is assimilative. With a sure divination, he has gone to the sources whence he could draw his inspiration without fear, because it was his own nature that he found there. *Don Quixote* is a pleasant and symbolic tale in which we have an illustration of the contrasting glory and misery of mankind; now it is from the sharp perception, the ironical teaching of this contrast that the philosophy of Sterne is at bottom made up; and so his main novel is full of Cervantes. The half-conscious strangeness, the 'quaintness' of Burton, now become more lucidly conscious, permeates every page of his work. His moments of good-nature recall Montaigne. He has suc-

[illegible] the jocularity of [illegible] He borrows [illegible] he most part [illegible]ithout quoting their names. But what he owes them, he [h]as compounded with what he owes to no one, and this is [a]ll that matters.

Tristram Shandy recounts the 'life and opinions' of the hero [—]an indefinite theme, worked out by a verve that has not [t]he slightest concern for order, unity, or logic. The story is [s]pun out of a long digression in which a hundred topics are [a]ll mixed and interwoven together. It is only in the third [b]ook that Tristram is born; his life remains obscure; begun [illegible]

[t]o this bewildering confusion: glancings off of the style, marked [b]y the constant use of the introductory dash, incomplete [s]entences, enigmatical paragraphs, diagrams, white or black [p]ages, etc. The work is a series of mental and verbal [p]irouettings.

This fancifulness is the humorous vestment—the most [v]ariegated imaginable—of a mind which finds a supreme [s]atisfaction, and the full display of its essentially ironic power, [i]n never expressing itself simply. Through the network of [t]hese manifold transpositions, from the release of which the [c]omic element springs, is visible the play of the indirect sug[g]estions which give the humour its serious taste and deep [v]alue. There is nothing new in the elements of Sterne's [p]hilosophy; but it associates in a novel way the subtle, cruel [a]nalysis of all the mediocre, ugly background covered up by [t]he conventional dignity of social life, with the effusion of [illegible]

[a]ccompanied, on the other hand, by a mixed emotion in which [t]he note of bitter pessimism can be perceived, but where the [d]ominant tone is that of compassionate tolerance.

The ring of this humour is the very resonance of the per[s]onality of Sterne; and it is no wonder that the characters he [h]as managed to draw should all suggest the same note with [v]arying shades of difference; for he does not possess the art

of creation in the highest degree; the figures of his book are visibly connected with him. The Shandy family is composed of original types; its members, and those who come into contact with them, are seen to be related among themselves and with the author. They all possess an oddity allied to a naturalness, and are gifted with an inner vitality that overcomes the resistance of judgment, and imposes the feeling of reality through the saving grace of our sympathy; but their outlines are keyed up to an extremely intense pitch; indeed, they escape being caricatures only by the geniality with which they are instinct. Dickens will remember these types.

Among the aspects of this philosophy and the devices of this humour, there are some which by their constant reappearance come to stand out like obsessions; those which touch upon the animality in human nature. The physiological reactions subjacent to the sentiments and acts of which polite society refuses to recognize anything save the spiritual side, the reverse of the emotions, the passions, and of life itself, haunt Sterne to such an extent as to clothe the whole of his work in a strange colouring of refined brutality and intellectual cynicism. This moral attitude is of a piece with that which in the *Sentimental Journey* concerns itself so minutely with the most imperceptible stirrings of the senses. There is nothing here that resembles the great broad laugh of Rabelais; it is like a relish for ambiguity indulged in for its own sake; it is a sly irreverence which, without ever saying anything, insinuates everything. One is tempted to see in it a craving for truth, a stubborn frankness of spirit which covers itself up, or pretends to do so, behind the superficial reticence and prudery of the world, and gains in addition a comic value from this transparent mask. The vision of the contrast, as a rule hypocritically hidden, between the moral being and the brute in man, would therefore be at the root of all this order of pleasantry; a vision at bottom bitter, tragic, and closely allied to Christian pessimism. But beside this moral concern, it is impossible not to see in it all a certain obsessing mania, some indelicacy, and some perversity pure and simple.

With time the art of Sterne developed towards a perfect sureness of touch. The *Sentimental Journey* is of a much more concentrated and sober form, of a purer line, than *Tristram Shandy*; and it cannot be said that the matter has become poorer, for the impressions and the episodes of this

sojourn in France allow a reflection that is always alert to indulge in a constant meditation upon life. The manners and character of the French occupy the foreground; and Sterne, certainly, has not seen all, or understood all he saw; his liberty of judgment is only relative; but it is remarkable, and his psychological ir [illegible] accuracy. A series of s [illegible] care, all full of subtle [illegible] what morbid, and yet ironical sentiment; where is displayed the quivering sense of the finest shades, together with a kind of persistent coarseness of attention—this is the work of a master writer, who has not yet been surpassed either in the finished polish of the detail, or in the handling of suggestion, though the labour itself and the concentration detract from the spontaneity of the whole.

[illegible] ism, which commands itself, is a new resource exploited by a severe and intellectual art; imagination here, while con- [illegible] thought. However free the style may be, it has not in any way thrown off the discipline of classicism; almost everything is merely understood, but the words are not instinct with an expressive force that in itself is indefinite and vague; they are not pregnant with music.

[illegible]

[1] To be consulted: E. A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel*, vols. iv and v, 1930, etc.; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chaps. I, III, IX; Cross, *Development of the English Novel*, 1899; idem, *Life and Times of Sterne*, 1925; Dobson, *Life of Goldsmith*, 1888; idem, *Richardson* (English Men of Letters), 1902; B. W. Downs, *Richardson*, 1929; Schmidt, *Richardson, Rousseau und Goethe*, 1875; Sichel, *Sterne, etc.*, 1910; Texte, *J.-J. Rousseau et les origines du cosmopolitisme littéraire*, 1895; Thayer, *Laurence Sterne in Germany*, 1905; C. Thomson, *Richardson*, 1900.

CHAPTER IV

REALISM

1. *Realism and the Modern English Mind.*—By the side of the novel of sentiment, the realistic novel develops. The two forms are not separated by any real opposition. They have some common traits, and are varieties of one and the same species.

Realism was already in existence; it had been the first to appear; Defoe had given it a very definite expression. The middle-class spirit and the classical mind were both favourable to it; and such instinctive bents of attention as might seem to contradict it, in this age as in the future, are seen to admit of it freely enough. Something which is the English mind itself, this general temperament in which the diverse tendencies of the extreme types are fused together, shows that henceforth it is bound up with it by a sure and constant affinity. The access of the middle classes to social influence had allowed this psychological mean, this average temper, to work itself out. The outstanding representative value of Fielding lies in the fact that he is widely and completely in harmony with it.

Fielding's first novel, *Joseph Andrews*, is the outcome of a conscious reaction against the first novel of Richardson, *Pamela*. But realism does not result from a reaction against sentimentalism; it continues to exist, only stimulated to a new and more aggressive affirmation of itself by the excess of an art in which the exigencies of Puritanism introduced a narrow and morbid view of human nature. Fielding, in fact, scoffed at Richardson, but knew also how to do him justice; but he did not want to stand over against him as an antithesis, but rather to improve upon him; he has certain essential instincts in common with him; and the course of his life, together with his work, drew the two writers together.

As compared with Richardson, he represents not only a complementary type of mind, but a more normal and sound one. His desire is to give sentiment its right place; but also to integrate it in an organic series of tendencies, where each contributes to maintain a mutual balance. Beside what is

an extreme type, he stands not for the other extreme, but for the synthesis, the practical and the most stable form. His realism unites the most common desires of the new society in England: the taste for the concrete, the need to see it without illusion in order not to feel any surprise or disappointment when acting upon it and co-operating with it; the resolution not to sacrifice the several elements of the human being one to another, and to know at times how to feel a soft emotion, [illegible] vention neglects. His pursuit of reality was never prompted by rancour or hatred. On this point, Smollett, his contemporary, differs from him. Temperamental motives, personal impulses, lead the author of *Roderick Random* away from this middle line, and bring him to an intentional harshness, a crudeness of description, in which a set purpose is revealed, and which call to mind the pessimistic realism of the nineteenth century.

2. *Fielding.*—Fielding's[1] desire is to depict things as he sees them; and his vision is not that of Richardson. The lights and shades over the prospect of the moral world are not distributed in the same way for him. His personal experience is *somewhat mixed; he allows us to gather the fact from his* work the more readily, as a certain easy indulgence in manners

progress towards delicacy, which temper an inspiration at times a trifle crude without weakening it in any way. *Amelia* gives us a more inviting image of the world, in which feminine goodness redeems and corrects many an error; and one could be led to perceive in the intention behind this picture a more marked fondness of heart for that ideal of sentiment which Fielding had treated, in his early works, with ironical mistrust. He drew nearer to Richardson, just as Richardson never ceased to think of him. The realism of *Amelia* is homely and intimate, anticipating Rousseau and Goldsmith. Relieved as it is of all epic pretension, and giving itself out more simply for what it is, strong in the profundity and solidity of the theme it treats—conjugal relations after the tastes of English middle-class society—with more life in its dialogues, more rapidity in its narrative, this novel would be Fielding's masterpiece, if it had not, on the other hand, its weak points in construction, and if *Tom Jones* did not retain the advantage of an incomparable robustness.

It is also a more sober, unadorned art, a lightness of touch which at times attains to grace, and the turn of an easy style, that assure their original place to less substantial writings, such as the *Journey from This World to the Next*, an unequal work, which at certain moments makes one think of Voltaire as much as of Lucian. *Jonathan Wild* is on a superior level; not that the subject is new: the theme of the reversing of social situations and moral values had already often been dealt with; it is at the centre of that vein of parody which runs through the very core of the classical age. But the condensed irony, the self-mastery, the mental liberty heightened by the implicit violence of the thwarted passion, have here a power that recalls and equals Swift. The last work of Fielding—the account of his voyage to Lisbon—is of a different note; it has a taking charm where the melancholy of an approaching end commingles with the gaiety of a still sarcastic reflection, and with the generosity of a still elevated mind.

3. *Smollett.*—The realism of Smollett [1] is of quite another

[1] Tobias George Smollet, born in Scotland (1721), studied at Glasgow, adopted a medical career and was attached as surgeon to a warship; but after several literary attempts (a tragedy, *The Regicide*, which no one would stage; two satires, *Advice* and *Reproof*, etc.), the success of his first novel, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, 1748, decided his vocation, although he did not abandon medicine. He translated *Gil Blas* (1749), published two new novels (*The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, 1751; *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom*, 1752), compiled or corrected works for publishers (notably a *History of England*, 1757–65; *The Present State of All Nations*, 1768–9; a translation of Voltaire, etc.), while writing a farce, *The Reprisal, or the Tars of Old England*,

tic tonality, as the group of moral tendencies with which connected is of a different nature. The search for truth he description of the world here retains, no doubt, someg intellectual; Smollett also is a classicist by his culture, y the general trend of his thought; but his classicism is of a pure quality; the imperious demands of a very personal perament bring into it a number of divergent elements. ertain respects his work moves with the general developt of literature. It has nothing, however, that can be ribed as really Romantic; nothing in it presages the sive renovation of the methods of art.[1]

n inner grudge against life, together with the need of hing a pride that has been hurt, count for much in the

s of many wounds go to the making of a deep rancour, those who were responsible, protects them, and against eved disposition, a raw susibility, a sarcastic turn of mind, an aridness—at least rior—in sentiment, are the prominent characteristics of moral figure. A chronic irritability is the result. To things as they are, and give full measure to the ugly cts of life, will be to taste a cruel pleasure in tearing n the veils of deception; and perhaps the vision of evil

This state of mind is that of the satirist. Smollett indeed wrote satires, vigorous in their inspiration and declamatory in their form. But it is only in prose that he is a poet; his language, often vivid and concrete, has at times a force of expressive eloquence; the tremor of an overstrung sensibility raises it in places to a sort of harsh, short-lived lyricism. It is in his novels that he has expressed himself. To a much greater extent than Fielding he has voiced his personality in his work. Roderick Random offers the transposed picture of the hard years of his own youth; Matthew Bramble, an idealization of his softened old age.

He borrows the framework of his stories from the picaresque tales of adventure. He translates *Gil Blas*, and is fully aware of his indebtedness. He also translates *Don Quixote*, the central theme of which he imitates in his *Launcelot Greaves*. But a more feeble imitation could not be found. With Le Sage he compares more honourably; instead of an ironical, light-hearted scepticism, it is a corrosive humour that impregnates the succession of scenes, incidents, and episodes which the hero traverses on his way to a provisional or final destiny. Smollett leads his Roderick, his Peregrine, even the criminal Count Fathom, to final happiness, fortune, and virtue. His moral and sentimental outlook is not of the most delicate, as is shown in the love scenes and indicated in many other ways; his claim—sincere, it is true—of writing moralizing works is supported by a dénouement that is happy and conformable with popular tastes. For despite fiercely personal moods and impulses, he is rather easily and submissively in harmony with certain commonplace conventions. His nature does not develop in depth. Very sensitive to the external aspect of things, he has a less appreciative understanding of souls, and his realism is above all of the physical and descriptive order.

While *Peregrine Pickle* is less strained, less violent, and of a more careful art than *Roderick Random*, its composition is just as loose; and the ferocity of Smollett's first novel has a concentrated ardour, and its verve possesses a savour, which give to the book a superior intensity of character. This remains his most solid literary claim.

Smollett does not offer us so large a picture of society in its entirety as Fielding. More errant still, the careers of his heroes leads us through spectacles of greater diversity; he unfolds to our gaze many vistas of the picturesque aspects of life, but the link that unites them is superficial; the strong

picturesqueness, and their language has a salty flavour; the pen that etches them in just sufficiently oversteps reality to merge slightly into caricature, without, however, wounding that instinct of truth which common sense sets against false creati

only

literature, but they have had numberless successors; they

us in one brief vision, so that nothing is allowed to blur the exterior outline by which they are defined. But the heroes themselves of these novels of adventure are disappointing, for there is nothing here to replace the absent psychological study. The conception of Fathom—a type of villain—might have been interesting; it proceeds from a praiseworthy desire for renovation. But Smollett himself scarcely takes him

sympathetic, it is difficult to find them so. It would perhaps be unjust to reproach them with their mediocrity, for the picaresque class of writing demands average characters, and one has readily been grateful to a more modern naturalism

to Smollett. However indignant he may be against human nature in the abstract, he has shown a weakness for it as exemplified in his heroes; and the disagreeable truth appears to be that their moral insensibility, their indelicacy, and even at times their wickedness, were not intended by him as the consequence of a systematic purpose, but are the effect of a certain

talent had undergone, while following an autonomous development: that of Fielding, who taught him how better to construct an action and a character; that of Sterne, who had shown what a wealth of humour lay in the introversion and dividing, so to say, of self; and one must also add that of Richardson, for *Humphry Clinker* is written in the epistolary form. Above all, the book bears the trace of the inner progress of a soured personality towards peace, of a negative mind towards a more discriminating sense of things. The idea of the essential relativity of human opinions, which in itself is a source of tolerance, took possession of Smollett to such a degree that he organized his action round it; the same facts turn up again under the pen of different correspondents, and are explained each time in a different way. Richardson had had recourse to this device; but the sustained use to which it is here put is of a very strong philosophical interest. An attention that is turned towards the angle of vision particular to each personage will of course tend towards the intimate analysis of each, and so the psychology of the novel is more carefully studied.

There are still, certainly, episodes of a very uncouth verve; the plot is again weak; while the comic inventiveness which spends itself in creating the maid Jenkins or Lieutenant Lismahago is not of the highest order. The work has qualities that are unexpected, and please the more; at the same time, it is not without showing in a way Smollett's old defects. On the other hand, it reveals more clearly the background of human kindness which had been hidden by the aggressive pessimism of the first works, and which was only perceptible at rare moments. Not only does Smollett, like Fielding, allow himself to be won over by the prevailing sentimentality, but just as the other he shows a true compassion for the victims of society. Matthew Bramble, in whom the author has put much of himself, is a kind of surly humanitarian. Here realism culminates in philanthropy—an alliance that is to be fruitful. Taken up again and carried further at a later date, it will serve the lasting success of realism in England.

To be consulted: E. A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel*, vols. iv and v 1930, etc.; A. Blum, *Hogarth*, 1923; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chap. II; Cross, *Development of the English Novel*, 1889; idem, *The History of Henry Fielding*, 1919; Digeon, *Les Romans de Fielding*, 1923; Dobson, *Fielding* (English Men of Letters), 1907; Péronne, *Englische Zustände im xviii Jahrhundert nach den Romanen von Fielding und Smollett*, 1890; Raleigh, *The English Novel*, 1894; Thackeray, *English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century*, 1853; Wershoven, *Smollett et Lesage*, 1883.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL LITERATURE

1. *Political Unrest after 1750.*—The classical age coincided with a relatively stable order in society. Upon close examination, no doubt, the epoch of Queen Anne and of the first two Hanoverian rulers is anything but quiet; a war of intrigues, cabals, individual rivalry and party struggles, pursues its course almost without a break. But this unrest is inseparable from the régime which the English nation had chosen for itself and in which we find strong oligarchical tendencies combining

menace of the Jacobites, by the open practice of corruption, and by the violence of Walpole's enemies, do not destroy the character of a period in which a regular movement, without any serious jolt, develops and establishes the results of the Revolutic
more anc
aristocrac
way until
the slow
make itself felt.

But this atmosphere of calm, which is only relative, leaves room for a surging unrest of a rather serious nature when,

the country the secular duel between England and France attains one of its decisive moments; naval supremacy is at stake; and, lastly, the thorny problem of the opposition between the interests of Great Britain and the susceptible independence of her colonies now reveals itself. Public life traverses a phase of unrest as varied as it is profound, which

is reflected in the thought of the time either by pessimism, or by the active desire for national reform and regeneration.

In this atmosphere, political conviction and passion are among the most fecund stimulants of literary creation. Motives for strife had never been lacking, and in the preceding generation Swift had turned such themes to incomparable use. For a brief space they again become one of the dominant forces of inspiration.

This literature is still classical in form, and scarcely departs in spirit from classicism. But it owes to the vivacity and spontaneity of the sentiments which give birth to it something that is more sincere and more direct. Prose is enlivened by a vehemence which fertilizes the rhetoric of language; a form of poetry which was dying—satire in verse—is again animated by a living object. The slow and gradual evolution towards Romanticism owes a stage of its progress to the 'patriotism' of Junius, Churchill, and Chatham, as to all the reawakening sources of genuine sentiment.

2. *Wilkes, Junius.*—The years which precede and follow the accession of George III (1760) witness an increase in the swarming numbers of pamphleteers and political journalists. Men of letters are enlisted to defend the prerogatives of the sovereign: Smollett is put in charge of the *Briton*; others set up for the 'country's' advocates against the court; in the *North Briton*, Wilkes [1] supports the case of the opposition.

The figure of Wilkes is of very great historical interest. His literary work would not in itself have sufficed to raise him above his rivals. He owes his place in the national memory of the English people to the independence, prone to be aggressive, of a conduct and a language, the sincerity of which is at times and to some people a little questionable. The scandals of his life, and the boldness of his opinions, called forth against him from many of his contemporaries a reprobation that was not dispelled after his death. This agitator, however, with his powerful fertility of verve, represented for a brief time the cause of a constitutional liberty to which the British instinct is still attached. His gifts are second-rate. He is talented

[1] John Wilkes, born in London in 1727, the son of a brewer, after a youth of dissipation entered Parliament, launched the *North Briton* (1762–3), was prosecuted for his attacks against the person of the king (No. 45), and formed the centre of one of the most important episodes in the political strife then ensuing. Suspended three times from Parliament, he finally resumed his seat as a victor, and died in 1797, at peace with the powers in authority. *Correspondence*, 1805. See P. Fitzgerald, *Life and Times of Wilkes*, 1888; Treloar, *Wilkes and the City*, 1917; H. Bleackley, *Life of John Wilkes*, 1917.

as a polemist, knows how to handle irony and insult, how to appeal to the susceptibilities of his public; but his facility has no depth, nor has his style any personality.

The value of the famous letters of 'Junius'[1] is of quite another order.

The mystery which enshrouded them, and which has not yet been cleared up, counts for something in their unique prestige. If their effectiveness has not been quite what their author desired, they played, nevertheless, a part in the social development of the time; they constitute a document for the historian. *But their most precious claim lies in themselves.* They remain one of the highest achievements in polemical literature.

Efforts have been made to disparage the inspiration which animates them. It is certainly not irreproachable. Junius writes, not only on behalf of principles, and against facts or tendencies, but against men; he writes for others, and it has been possible to connect his work with the political interests of a definite group. The personal touch in the object of his attacks, and in the doctrine which prompts them, introduces therein some particular and arbitrary elements His hostility is too stubborn not to be impassioned, and too impassioned to remain just; the movement of his eloquent logic represents too vigorous an impulse not to become, at a certain moment, an autonomous force, independent of reason or conscience His indictments too often overshoot their mark, they leave all charitable feeling behind, and even truth itself. Those who [illegible]

[illegible] prejudice, it quivers with a moral emotion which one cannot refuse to characterize as noble. The loftiness of the thought [illegible]

[illegible] sworn enemy of Warren Hastings, and a member of Parliament. See [illegible] Francis, *Junius Revealed*, 1894; Smith, *Junius Unveiled*, 1909, etc

CHAPTER VI

THE THEATRE

the Theatre, and the Struggle of Tendencies.
; had seen the withering of the dramatic
ration, which by its brilliance, and despite
id not make too discreditable a showing
nt flowering of the theatre in Elizabethan
., this form of literature seems to lose its
y during the course of the last threescore
ghteenth century is one of a long decadence,
e occasional break when the talent of an
ies for a brief moment. So definite is the
nch of literature that its effects increase
ards the end of the century it reaches the
lownward trend.
on offers itself, that at a time when the
ncreasing in numbers, the taste for the
g less. The most austere section of the
conduct of which is regulated by Puritan,
iodist views, still fosters an aversion on
ty.
nnot be decisive, however, as certain facts
ss. The eighteenth century is an epoch of
playhouse managers are not doing bad
son is that the aristocracy has never with-
from this form of amusement, above all, it
ore frivolous aspects; so that the theatre
centres of fashionable and intellectual life;
dle class, which shares with the nobility in
cepts generally, on this point as on others,
erences of a class whose culture is of longer

t for want of spectators that there are fewer
drama of this age. The dearth of genius
for which, perhaps, one must not seek any
han its normality itself, if it is true that the
flowering are exceptional, and that it is

useless to judge by the English Renascence standard what one should expect after it.

One can [illegible] The new s[illegible] traits are [illegible] to the the[illegible] followers, [illegible] ing a com[illegible] refined circle were becoming less strong, the tendency of the average theatre-goer to demand easy pleasures—a tendency of long standing certainly, against which the greatest of the Elizabethans had had to contend—finds less counterweight in the judgment of the *élite*, or it may be that the *élite* itself has lost its power. Addison had raised his voice in vain against Italian opera. The years which follow see the rise of the pantomime, which takes up again, while lowering the [illegible]

Serious opera and ballad-opera are brilliantly successful throughout the century; and the settings, the scenery, and the costumes attain a wealth of effect as yet unequalled. These material means draw the attention of the audience to their profit. At the same time, the spirit of the staging becomes [illegible]

enthusiasm of the public, but attach it to such or such a part, such or such an interpretation, such or such a piece of stagecraft, or even such or such a player, rather than to the play itself. The sovereign influence of Garrick, which was in

other respects fecund, and did much to spread the cult of Shakespeare, was not without attracting the attention of a public, already given over to superficial enjoyments, in the direction of the outward means of expression.

These diverse reasons can throw some light upon the decadence of the theatre. It is also certain that the imaginative, emotional needs which it used not long ago to satisfy are now catered for more directly and in a way that is more suitable to all tastes. The novel draws its vitality from a fund of realism, pathos, and humour which is the very stuff of comedy and drama; it also creates a fictive image of life, and allows it to impose upon minds the rich sense with which it is charged. Defoe and Richardson do not stir up any uneasiness in the Puritan conscience; the novel escapes the reproaches which the stage has incurred, and which the atmosphere of a playhouse, if not the play produced, still justifies to a greater or lesser degree. It lends itself better to prolonged and serious meditations; it has an incomparable grasp of reality and the problems of life. The modern novel, once fully developed, inherited during the eighteenth century the larger and nobler part of what was the former function of the theatre.

It cannot be said, however, that all the social influences converged towards a drying-up of the course of dramatic inspiration; there were some which tended to vivify by renewing it. When the conscience of the middle class sanctioned a return to the theatre, it brought with it original tastes; and more broadly speaking, the psychological movement which from then onwards accompanied the advent to power of this class in the national life was strongly impregnated with the forces of a new literature. Sentimental comedy was already in being. The plays of Steele could easily have seemed to open the way for a whole new order of effects.

It is a fact that the middle-class spirit did not show itself a potent inspiration so far as the theatre was concerned. The form in which it vested itself there did not find any great master to handle it. The reason was not that it suffered in itself from any aesthetic inferiority. But in becoming detached from the prestige of social rank, as from that of the past and of distance in space, the drama of modern times limits itself to the resources of realism. In order to exist completely, it has therefore to exhaust reality, and draw from life all that life can give to art. Moral, social, and philosophical problems must be brought, without the slightest

reserve, into its ken.
supposes a boldness, a
previous culture on the
did not possess before
Then only could drama utilize the life and thought of the time to fullest advantage.

Sentimental comedy and middle-class drama represent in Johnson's day a mere promise of what lies ahead, a form that is uncertain, unconscious of its future development. However timid and mediocre this form may appear to be on the average, it introduces a principle of renovation into the dramatic literature of the time. Its characteristics link it up by intimate affinities with the renascence of the national spirit. It remains distinct, no doubt, from Elizabethan tradition and the Shakespearian type of play, which enjoy throughout the course of this age a very marked renewal of favour; but it is in secret harmony with them, and its own influence tells along the same lines. This convergence has left definite traces; it is not by chance that the drama of

of inspiration, against the authority of regular comedy and tragedy, such as the Restoration had handed down to classicism. The most brilliant talents are on the classical side; on two occasions, the successes of George Colman, then of Goldsmith and Sheridan, seem definitively to eclipse all rival
medy in favour
e expressed the
transformation
is stronger than the tested simplicity of literary dogma, or
The inner movement of
drama, or the mixed
, the instincts of the majority remain in the ascendant, and the theatre drifts back to the new forms, and also to mediocrity. These are in complete control by the end of the century.

2. *Middle-class Drama; Lillo, Moore.*—The first group of works which calls for attention between 1730 and 176

has a following. The domestic drama he inaugurates is one of the principal expressions of the moral and social tendencies which contain the future in germ. In this lies the very great interest of his initiative. His boldness made a deep impression. People recalled the fact that it had precedents; Elizabethan tragedy brought the lowest grade of humanity on to the stage; and since then, Otway, Lee, and Rowe had taken liberties with the custom of restricting the occasions for pathos to the doings of kings and princes. But indirect precautions brought back their works more or less to orthodox standards; and the passing of a whole century had concealed the familiar simplicity of the Elizabethan theatre. Now for the first time, theatre-goers were invited to experience terror and pity at the sight of misfortunes of an exclusively *bourgeois* nature. *George Barnwell* is the story of an apprentice who is led by a courtesan to commit murder, and who expiates his crime.

Thus breaks up the illusion which indissolubly associated the greatness of dramatic emotion with the majesty of ranks removed from ordinary life. A true courage was required to brave so universal a prejudice.[1] This strength of purpose had in it a creative power, and Lillo's innovation exercised an influence and left a trace both in England and on the Continent. But in every other respect his play is weak. Taking as his theme the subject of an old ballad, he wove out of it a drama of a very primitive outlook; where there is none of that true simplicity which often carries to a degree of grandeur the inventions of the sons of the people, but rather that conventional and oversimplified view of things in which an inborn vulgarity of taste is revealed. The action has the improbable atmosphere of a morality play; the edifying purpose of the author is everywhere prominent; the psychology deals in mere moral diagrams; the sentiment is declamatory; a regrettable desire for elegance makes the language, at times, lose all healthy frankness of expression. As in *Pamela*, the delicate situations are painfully emphasized. All this, however, is not shorn of an elementary kind of appeal to the feelings, rather analogous at bottom to that of Richardson, but robbed of any wealth of nuance by the inevitable exaggeration of stage effects.

[1] Lillo in this play flourishes his standard quite openly. The dedication affirms that a domestic tragedy is more useful for morality than any other, since its field of application is wider. The piece contains an enthusiastic apology for commerce; a type of worthy merchant, generous, magnanimous, etc.

The dramatic work of Lillo is otherwise negligible. He had not the strength of will to apply his formula with any persistence; his career is one of singular lapses, irregular in its course, and betraying a very hesitant mind.

But in the history of literature he retains a place of primal importance. Not only did he break the spell which prevented the birth of domestic drama, but at the same stroke he destroyed the exclusive prestige of rhymed tragedy. *George Barnwell* is written in prose, if the other plays of Lillo return to the poetic form; and his prose, which is still in the bondage of stylistic habits foreign to spoken language, heralds the full liberty which will one day be acquired.

The influence of Lillo in France, where he directed towards middle-class drama the development already begun in lachrymose comedy, and where he found an enthusiastic imitator in Diderot; in Germany, where he was an active force through his own works, and through the theories of Diderot, is one of the most perceptible traces of that communication of themes, which from then onwards assumes so great an importance in the interrelations of European literatures, and which reveals the growing convergence of their developments.

In England, one must come to Moore [1] in order to find a worthy disciple of Lillo. He is even superior to his master, although he does not possess the other's initiative.

In its main features, the art of *The Gamester* differs in no way from that of *George Barnwell*. We have here the same moralizing story of a humble or at least an average lot; of the ruin caused by passion in the familiar setting of life; the same search after the emotional in the consequences of the fall of a soul; the same complacent sentimentalizing. But the play is animated by the energy of a vigorous temperament; this temperament, while rough and awkward, is nevertheless endowed with some dramatic intuition; it is capable of a simplified psychology, without any originality, but acceptable to our inner sense. Despite the improbabilities of the plot, the conventional devices, the false mechanism of characters who are too well aware of themselves, manifest themselves too clearly, and influence one another too easily, the action has force and logic; a sombre poetry emanates from certain

[1] Edward Moore, born in 1712, a linen-draper, wrote verse, and produced two comedies, *The Foundling* (1748), *Gil Blas* (1751), and a drama, *The Gamester* (1753); edited a periodical, *The World*, and died in 1757. See Beyer, *Edward Moore*, 1889 (Leipzig); J. H. Caskey, *Life and Works of Edward Moore*, 1927.

tragic situations. Reminiscences of Shakespeare—and they are numerous—do not appear too much out of place in this atmosphere. One can understand the admiration of Diderot for this play, and how he found therein the full realization of his own dramatic ideal.

3. *Fielding, Foote, Colman, etc.*—In contrast with middle-class drama and sentimental comedy,[1] the traditional theatre offers us numerous works, of a very diverse and very unequal quality, among which one must not look for too precise a kinship. This large and scattered group could, however, be termed 'classical'; the plays which compose it are almost immune from sentimentalism; their inspiration is derived rather from the intellectual sources of literature; they respect the forms which time has consecrated, and obey precepts of ancient standing, even while they show some hankering for independence. One can distinguish among them the regular tragedies, the comic comedies, and the parodies, where the purpose of the writer harmonizes easily with the spirit of an age of satire.

This group as a whole is, generally speaking, opposed in its tendencies to that which precedes it; but the opposition is rather in the nature of a secret hostility than a declared war. The revolt against the excesses of sentiment in the theatre cannot be said as yet to have truly revealed itself. Certain individual affinities or sympathies even link up such of the representatives of classicism with writers of the other type. Fielding, who will become the avowed adversary of Richardson—until the day when the contagion of sentiment will also affect him—is a useful aid to Lillo in his early career and writes a prologue for one of his dramas His generous humanity approves of the broader social inspiration animating this new literary kind.

Popular tragedy is not productive of any masterpieces. The [illegible] influence of Voltaire stimulates the vitality of classical drama, the more efficiently as he himself while in England has modified and enlarged his own ideal His chief works are

[1] The latter, without disappearing, suffered a relative eclipse from 1730 to 1750, just when its cause seemed to have been won. The only remarkable work of this period, in this style of play, would appear to be *The Foundling* of Moore.

translated and imitated.[1] The name of Aaron Hill[2] is connected with these adaptations, among which *Zara* proves a popular success. Later, a version of *Horace* (*The Roman Father*, 1750), by William Whitehead, also makes a lasting impression.

The heroic tragedies of the Restoration, meanwhile, are yet enjoying popular favour. All the Romanticism and convention implied in their extravagance is shown up in the colder light of a more reasonable age; and the middle-class influences, the obscure need for a return to nature and to simple truth, count for something in the reaction of irony which is taking shape against Lee and Dryden. It is in this light that the parodies of Fielding and Carey acquire their true meaning. Profoundly classical in their deeper inspiration, they only touch the correct dramas of the school of Addison in passing, and take effect merely on their surface weaknesses.

The *Chrononhotonthologos* of Henry Carey (1734) is a truculent attack, and one that exhausts in a few scenes the comic vein of a facile satire. There is more humour and a richer inventiveness in the *Tom Thumb* of Fielding (1730); but the developed form of the same farce, the *Tragedy of Tragedies* (1731), with its precise allusions and the erudite and conscientious commentary that accompanies it, falls somewhat into the fault of a laboured caricature.[3] The law of this kind of writing is that boredom should not arise from a too stressed criticism of boredom. . . . Fielding is happier in a spontaneous fantasy such as the *Covent Garden Tragedy* (1733), and in the free expressions of his joyous verve, where literary parody commingles with a juvenile mockery of society, as in *The Author's Farce* (1730), or *Pasquin* and *The Historical Register* (1736).

Such, indeed, are also the tone and merit of his comedies,[4] which are very diverse in form, and range from farce to character studies. They are the light, rapid work of a genius

[1] In addition to the plays adapted by Hill, *Brutus*, *Mahomet*, *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, *L'Écossaise*, *L'Indiscret*, *Oreste*, *Tancrède*, *Les Scythes*, *Sémiramis*, were imitated on the English stage. Other native dramas show the influence of Voltaire. See Lounsbury, *Shakespeare and Voltaire*, 1902.

[2] Aaron Hill, 1685–1750, poet and dramatist, was an interesting figure in the literary and social life of this age. *Zara*, 1736; *Alzira*, 1736; *Merope*, 1739. *Dramatic Works*, 2 vols. 1760. See D. Brewster, *Aaron Hill, etc.*, 1913.

[3] See edition by J. T. Hillhouse, 1918.

[4] The principal are: *Love in Several Masques*, 1728; *The Temple Beau*, 1730; *Rape upon Rape, or The Justice caught in his Own Trap*, 1730; *Don Quixote in England*, 1734; and two adaptations from Molière: *The Mock Doctor*, 1732; *The Miser*, 1733.

ho has not yet lived long enough to be himself, but one can el in them the touch of a master; and one would perhaps be clined to praise them more, if they did not rather often over-ep the standard of propriety, and if the power of the novelist ld not by comparison injure their fragile mirth. They bear *ardly any resemblance to Congreve, with whom they are* ften connected; but by their movement, vivacity, easy turn, aturalness, and the shafts of satire they dart forth with layful and felicitous grace, they succeed in reminding us of olière in his early years. They have not the latter's strong old upon characters, or his passion for moral truth; their elative penetration is rather owing to the careless irreverence, the frank sincerity, of a mind that scoffs without respect all the values of which it will not accept the claims.

ing's
the
s, is

he Hist
f 1737,
f two,
bandoned the stage. He had created a type of play that as lighter, more supple than the traditional piece in five acts, nd had accentuated the movement which was carrying omedy to the study of contemporary manners.

His influence is very apparent in Samuel Foote,[1] whose hort and lively plays are a gallery of satirical pictures. omedy with him is hardly to be distinguished any longer

one, and the sentimental episodes with which Foote thought t to burden occasionally his ironical and cynical work, in rder to keep in touch with the fashion of the day, the whole

[1] 1720–77; an actor and remarkable mimic, he received permission to give at

itzgerald, *Samuel Foote*, 1910

... amusing, and of a rich interest for the historian of manners.[1]

Of an equally versatile and less personal talent, Murphy,[2] however, gives evidence of the ingenious skill that, in this age of decadence, was possessed by the very writers in whose hands comedy was degenerating. He creates nothing, and cannot be said to renew profoundly any of the subjects he borrows; but he has a gift of form, a verve, a cleverness, able o sustain in a pleasing way the interest of three or four acts. His farces, wholly surface work, succeed in being gay; among is more ambitious efforts, which tend towards the moralizing, not lachrymose theatre, one play, *The Way to keep him,* dapts a French theme to English manners with felicity and rilliance.

Between Fielding and Goldsmith, it is George Colman[3] no dominates regular comedy. With him, there is at first a arked hostility both in temperament and in principle to- rds sentimental writing. He begins with a satire on the ificial exaltation which has been encouraged by novels of Richardson type (*Polly Honeycombe*); while the *Tom es* of Fielding, with the admixture of other elements, be- nes in his hands a lively, amusing study of the struggle veen a prosaic and weak husband, and a wife driven to lness by jealousy (*The Jealous Wife*). But the taste of the ic for something of moving appeal in the theatre is ger than doctrinal preferences; and Colman's best play *Clandestine Marriage*, written in collaboration with ick), which probably represents the frankest expression e comic spirit after Fielding and before Goldsmith, is lespite the quality of its verve, of the seeking after the ure reaped from the tender emotions of the heart.

he Return to Shakespeare; the Theatre of Sentiment.—

of the most popular of the pure comedies of this age was *The Suspicious l* of Benjamin Hoadly, 1747.

ur Murphy, 1727–1805, wrote regular tragedies like *Zenobia*, 1768, *The Daughter*, 1772; farces like *The Upholsterer*, 1758, *The Citizen*, 1763; —in which the imitations and reminiscences of Molière are frequent— *he Way to keep him*, 1760; *All in the Wrong*, 1761. *Works*, 7 vols.,

e Colman the Elder, 1732–94, dramatist and theatrical director, trans- ence, edited the works of Beaumont and Fletcher, wrote comedies, others *Polly Honeycombe*, 1760; *The Jealous Wife*, 1761; *The Clande- iage*, 1766, and operettas; readapted masques, dramas, or comedies lish and foreign theatres: *Philaster*, 1763; *King Lear*, 1768; *Comus*, *English Merchant* (*L'Écossaise* of Voltaire), 1767, etc. *Works*, 7.

Side by side with the vein of orthodox dramatic art, however, is to be found abundant evidence of the change which is taking place in the instincts themselves of cultured theatre-goers. In the course of the struggle waged against tradition, the new forms are favoured by the atmosphere of a time when sentiment is extending its sway in spite of all.

The years from 1730 to 1760 represent the period in which the popularity of Shakespeare effaces that of all his rivals; he now takes his pre-eminent place in the favour of the uneducated and educated alike. His dramas, often mutilated, and disfigured by the freest adaptations, at times owe their greatest success to the least profound of their aspects. But the cult of Shakespeare is a symptom of the evolution in taste; it corresponds with a general, almost universal need for a truth and an intensity, of which the free creations of the Elizabethans supply the fullest and most direct sensation.[1] Despite the compromises and the transitions from one form to another which contemporary taste establishes, it is obvious that classical tragedy is losing all that Shakespearian drama is gaining.

A great actor, Garrick,[2] stimulated this renewal of enthusiasm. The director of a theatre and himself a dramatist, he adapts, stages, and plays in more than half of Shakespeare's works. His versions of masterpieces which to-day command greater respect are not always happy. But he adds to the influence of his selections that of his own art, of which the sincerity, suppleness, and naturalness contrast with the cold and stilted style of playing, the emphatic monotonous diction which prevailed before him.

To the same deep need for naturalness and moving truth one must attribute the great success, both in Edinburgh and in London, of a drama, the *Douglas* of Home,[3] where amid the moralizing naïvety and conventional declamation are to be found notes of simplicity, strong evocations, and descriptions of Scottish scenery. The defects of the play are to-day very apparent; the contemporaries were above all struck by the refreshing atmosphere which an historical theme, a primitive

colouring, a style that seeks unadorned forcefulness and at times finds it, brought into tragedy.

Sentimental comedy, lastly, was maintaining its sway; from 1760 to 1770 it shows its largest output and its most brilliant successes. The fact that Kelly's[1] *False Delicacy* coincided with the first venture of Goldsmith as a dramatist has given this play the importance of a manifesto in defence of sentiment against irony. But it is of a mixed character; it preaches an ideal of simplicity in the manner of Rousseau, and while it cannot resist the seductive appeal of emotion, at the same time it adopts a critical attitude towards any over-refined or exaggerated fondness for it. Of a purer and less alloyed character is the sentimental effusion to be found in Whitehead (*The School for Lovers*, 1762), Mrs. Sheridan (*The Discovery*, 1763), Isaac Bickerstaff (*The Maid of the Mill*, 1765), Mrs. Griffiths (*The School for Rakes*, 1769), and especially in Richard Cumberland,[2] the leader of this school. In his most typical works—*The Brothers*, *The West Indian*, *The Fashionable Lover*—the interweaving of a plot rich in unexpected incidents and discoveries of lost heirs with scenes for the most part moving and edifying, and with a comic vein used merely as a relief, wholly episodical and secondary, answers to tastes from which melodrama will evolve about the early years of the following century. The full consciousness of the inclination which attracts an honest heart to sentiment, the stress laid on simple nature as the source of all virtues, the exaltation of charity, together with a tone of philosophic preaching and the justification of certain victims of social prejudices go to make these plays the composite expression of all the tendencies which at this moment are amalgamating in the English and European cult of sensibility.

5. *The Revival of Comedy; Goldsmith and Sheridan.*—In the literary fabric of this age, however, were combined the opposing strands of serious sentiment and rational scepticism; there was a whole order of temperaments which lachrymose comedy could not satisfy. Moreover, it awoke the sense of incongruity in other minds besides those of a dry and ironical disposition; all who by taste preferred the clearly defined

[1] Hugh Kelly, 1739–77; *False Delicacy*, 1768; *A Word to the Wise*, 1770; *The School for Wives*, 1773, etc. *Works*, 1778.

[2] Richard Cumberland, 1732–1811; *The Brothers*, 1769; *The West Indian*, 1771; *The Fashionable Lover*, 1772. See his *Memoirs* (2 vols., 1807); S. T. Williams, *Richard Cumberland*, 1917; and for his works: Mrs. Inchbald, *British Theatre*.

forms of art must impatiently endure the reign of a hybr paradoxical type of play. Lastly, the power of pure comed the joyous gift of laughter for its own sake, were granted some talented writers less hopelessly fond of unseasonal tears; and some playwrights were found who could restore short-lived splendour to comedy through the virtue of the inventive skill and verve.

No one knew better than Goldsmith the charm that lay emotions sympathetically shared in and felt; but his ric

occasions, and with unequal success, he tried to revive since laughter on the stage.

The Good-Natured Man is a still timid attempt. Gol smith[1] here pokes fun at the excess of a wholly instincti and unreasonable charity, deprived of the moral streng without which no real goodness can exist. It was thus attack against sentimentalism in its very essence, and indee round this central theme we have the unfolding of episod that really breathe a contagious gaiety. But the her instead of being ridiculous, makes an irresistible claim upo our affection; and from the play there emanates a pleasin sweetness of soul which in many respects brings it closer to th lachrymose type of play. *She Stoops to Conquer* is furth removed from it. A piquant observation, elements of in genious and new realism, a welling forth of pleasantry tha never dries up, and bathes even the rare moments whe emotion could rise—all go to make this charming comedy a unalloyed source of amusement. But it endears itself to much to endanger at all efficiently a fashion that sought t please by playing upon the sensitive chords of human natur

Of still greater brilliance, the efforts of Sheridan[2] had n

[1] See above, Book III, Chap. III, sect. 3. He has given the reasons for attitude in 'A Comparison between Laughing and Sentimental Comed (*Westminster Magazine*, 1773).

There is thus no deep unity in the tendencies of his theatre; and unity is not either the forte of his plays. They combine with skill diverse elements, plots and themes; they are amalgams of successful, sometimes admirable scenes, rather than organic masterpieces. Sheridan is not a psychologist, but a shrewd and penetrating observer; he is more able to [illegible] and verbal virtuosity. Here at least he moves with astonishing mastery.

The Rivals is a [illegible] but one in which [illegible] atmosphere of al[illegible] imitation—memories of the Restoration, and of Molière—there stand out figures that are new, or appear to be so. Without daring to disappoint the public completely in its sentimental expectation, the play outlines in the name of sound reason a reaction of temperament and taste against the whole range of pre-Romantic preferences. *The School for Scandal* combines several plots, through the saving virtue of an irresistible gaiety and talent; and Sheridan in it has given the English theatre some of its wittiest scenes. *The Critic*, less equal in quality, again gives full play to a rather cruel, satirical verve, which had been somewhat repressed in the preceding work by the moral purpose of the author; in addition to the burlesque, derisive fun poked at the bombastic type of writing—a satire imitated from Buckingham and Fielding—the comedy offers us a broad lively study of the social forms which the secret strife of exasperated pride takes with authors and critics alike. Here again, many passages recall Molière, and are not unworthy of him.

Sheridan's achievement in comedy, however great its success, did not destroy the vitality of the sentimental play; the contagion of a seductive vogue was stronger than the example of an individual and transitory triumph. In the mediocrity into which dramatic production falls back after this writer, the last efforts of classical tragedy, now dying, are paralleled by comedies in which laughter is only the seasoning element of an emotional delectation. The plays of Hannah More (*Percy*, a philosophic tragedy, 1771), Miss Lee

(*The Chapter of Accidents*, 1780), Burgoyne (*The Heiress*, 178 Mrs. Cowley (*The Runaway*, 1776), whether or not they ma an effort to break away and follow the path opened up Sheridan, do not free themselves from the thraldom of sen ment, and link up lachrymose drama with the revolutiona theatre of Holcroft and Mrs. Inchbald. An optimistic a soft conception of human nature henceforth prevents t general public from tasting any pleasure in a coldly ironic picture of life.

To be consulted: R. W. Babcock: *The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, 176 1799*, 1932; A. B. Baker, *History of the London Stage, etc.*, 1904; Bernbau *The Drama of Sensibility*, 1915; *Cambridge History of English Literatu* vol. x, Chaps. IV, IX; vol. xi, Chap. XII; Gaiffe, *Le Drame en France au xvi siècle*, 1910; Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage, etc.*, 1832; Gos *History of Eighteenth Century Literature*, 1889; Kilbourne, *Alterations a Adaptations of Shakespeare*, 1906; Lanson, *Nivelle de la Chaussée et la Comé larmoyante*, 1887; Sir S. Lee, *Shakespeare and the Modern Stage*, 1907; Matthews, *The Development of the Drama*, 1904; Millar, *The Mid-Eighteen Century*, 1902; A. Nicoll, *A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama, 175 1800*, 1927; Mrs. Parsons, *Garrick and his Circle*, 1906; Sharp, *Short Histo of the English Stage*, 1909; Seccombe, *The Age of Johnson*, 1899; Sichel, *Life Sheridan*, 1909; D. Nichol Smith, *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, 192 Tupper, *Representative English Dramas from Dryden to Sheridan*, 1915.

CHAPTER VII

RATIONALISM

1. *Persistence of the Rational Current.*—Among the mixed tendencies of this epoch of transition, there persists a strong current of rational thought, either pure, or diffused in a general attitude of mind.

The eighteenth century still thinks itself, and indeed in many respects it still is, the age of reason. The need of

and those of criticism. Middle-class circles react, obscurely and persistently, in the direction of an instinctive, obstinate preference for the rights of morality and sentiment. But over political frontiers is created an international rhythm, in which all nations of advanced culture participate. From one end of Europe to the other, philosophy is in fashion. French influences on English soil stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the intrepidity of the reflective mind. Personal relations are

On the whole, and despite the pronounced divergence presented by the influence of Rousseau, the radiation of French thought in England adds something to the spontaneous power of the current of intellectualism.

Besides the philosophers, this current makes itself felt in the

ideas; and also in those of the letter-writers and diarists, who paint a picture of their time without much illusion, and adapt

a homely morality to the exigencies of society. These last belong, all but a few, to the wealthier classes; they have the culture of the aristocracy; and their attitude clearly reveals what subsists of an elegant and cosmopolitan rationalism in the highest social circles. A whole aspect of the age of Johnson revives in the works of a Chesterfield and a Walpole.

2. *Philosophy; Hume.*—David Hume,[1] as has often been noted, passed the decisive years of the formative period of his life at La Flèche, where Descartes had sojourned. In a sense, he is the Descartes of England; his philosophic enterprise is just as daring, and its influence no less revolutionary. But Descartes carried out his research with the direct vigour of a spiritualist for whom the pre-eminence of thought was an implicit fact of experience. Hume, more empiric and objective, decides to look for the explanation of the world and the laws of life, not in the thinking self, but in that more complex reality, human nature. Locke had already emphasized the method of observation, and what will become at a later date psychology. Hume, who is just as positive and realistic in his tendencies, brings to his examination a superior power of acute intelligence and logic. The first form, and the most uncompromising, of his philosophy is an analysis the rigour of which has never been surpassed.

His originality lies essentially in the fact that he places in the constitution of human nature the centre, round which are organized our knowledge of the universe and all the sciences. The doctrine of Kant will merely give this subjectivism the form of a system. He thus questions that inner reality which is the only one that we can immediately comprehend, and only

[1] David Hume, born in Edinburgh in 1711, of rural gentry stock, studied law, essayed commerce, and resided for several years in France, where he wrote the first two volumes of his *Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), which, however, escaped notice, as well as a third volume (1740). His *Essays, Moral and Political* (1741–8), had more success. After the publication of *Philosophical Essays concerning Human* [illegible] *An Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals* (1751, [illegible] (1752), appeared *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* (1753–4; revised and enlarged up to 1777). Already attracted to history, he published in fragments his *History of Great Britain* (1754–61), which relieved him of pecuniary worries. On his appointment as secretary to the English embassy in Paris, he was very warmly received (1763–5); in 1766 there took place the quarrel with Rousseau, who had accompanied him to England. He settled in Edinburgh, where he died in 1776; his *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* appeared in 1779; his *Autobiography* in 1777. *Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. by Selby-Bigge, 1896; *Essays*, ed. by Green and Grose, 1875. See Burton, *Life of Hume*, 1846; G. Lechartier, *David Hume*, 1900; Teisseire, *Les Essais économiques de Hume*, 1902; Huxley, *Hume* (English Men of Letters), 1879; Thomson, *David Hume*, 1912.

finds in it either more intense phenomena—what he names impressions—or others more feeble, which recall the first, and which he names ideas. This mental world is governed by a

semblance, identity, space, time, cause and effect, etc. What is the origin of such relationships, and of those, especially, like space, time, and the causal relation, which seem to be independent of the nature of the objects they unite? Hume sees in them only the implicit generalization of a connection which we have always or almost always experienced. We can never actually perceive the cause of a fact; but the sight of a flame a short distance away is accompanied by heat, and we connect the one sensation with the other by a causal link.

Thus the demonstration that aimed at finding a base for science ends in depriving it of that existence outside of ourselves, of that metaphysical reality, without which it was agreed that human thought would lose its indispensable support. Hume inflicts the most bewildering shock upon the minds that are secure in the confident feeling of a divine or natural order; the universe is broken up into an indefinite series of phenomena which our various needs group together according to uncertain formulae, and where in the fleeting unsubstantiality of everything we find no fixed support, neither permanent bodies, nor an ego that perceives itself as a durable being. All is relative, and even mathematics are constructed only by eliminating the accidents and irregularities of things. To know is therefore to invent; to believe is to register the authority of an idea which is accompanied by an impression of irresistible force.

This absolute scepticism was to be slightly tempered at a later date, and to receive a less inflexible expression. But the philosophical figure of Hume is fixed by it; he remains the most purely intellectual of British thinkers; and no doubt his

of a natural sympathy in all, an instinct of disinterest benevolence; virtue, to him, is what satisfies the interest take in others; vice is what wounds it. He also is affected the wave of humanitarian optimism. To practical questio he spontaneously applies the utilitarian rule of action; men doubt, here, yields to the necessity of living; and just li every other man, the sceptic has to affirm and even to belie His religious ideas, of a very bold nature, never adopted t polemical form sought after by the French school of phi sophers. His analysis of the miraculous tends to deny existence; like Lucretius, he derives the need for faith fro the emotions and anguish of the human lot; the 'religion nature' does not escape his criticism, and he cannot read the order of the world the clear revelation of any provident plan; yet he does not deny all possibility of a prude adhesion to such beliefs; indeed he seems to accept a vag Deism. The irony with which he veils his thought in fro of the ban placed by society upon the frank discussion *certain problems, is not aggressive, but discreet and as it we* indulgent. There is in him a kind of amenity, which softe the hard tone of his intellectualism.

In politics, he is not a believer in the social contra Necessity, he holds, has brought mankind together, and t struggle of each against all has given rise to a tacit und standing; but this progress has been wholly empirical; and is the family, the simplest association for mutual aid, whi has supplied the model to the state. His economic doctri reacts against the mercantile system, and outlines a libe criticism of the arbitrary interventions of the law.

The last word of this courageous and at the same ti prudent thinker is a lesson in sceptical reserve, subservient the imperious claims of life, and rather analogous to t agnosticism and positivism of the moderns, with a touch that utilitarian wisdom which at a still later date will designated pragmatism. Hume therefore is not outside the deeper tendencies of English thought; he marks the treme point attained by it in a phase of free rational activi To-day his psychology is out of date, and so the constructi which he raised collapses at its base. But the method impli in his criticism is of an ever fresh fecundity. He has sho the most accurate sense of the course which must be follow by the search after truth. The scientific and philosop value of his work is inexhaustible.

It has also a literary value Hume possesses the natural gift of clearness. His most subtle analyses are astonishingly lucid. The three years during which he was in intimate contact with the French tongue have left their mark upon him. His language is sober, terse, classical, and as supple as it is precise; his syntax has freedom and ease. Without sacrificing anything to art, he is a writer.

3. *History: Hume, Robertson, etc*—Clarendon and Burnet were not yet historians in the strict sense of the word. After them, the very keen struggles between political parties stimulated the interest taken by the public in the nation's past, but at the same time such strife was not conducive to the serene attitude of mind necessary for the impartial narration of facts. Litt[illegible]
the value of tests [illegible]
of a curious interes[illegible]
relation to the revival of imagination, is revealed in the publication of the collection of *Foedera et Conventiones* by Rymer and Sanderson.[1] And under the influence of the reflective quest bearing on the moral problem of man, a [illegible]

[illegible]

Hume while in France had breathed an air that was charged with suggestions favourable to such an undertaking; the taste for erudition on the one hand, the search after general expositions on the other, had produced some noteworthy works in that country; the century of Voltaire promised to be engrossed by a vast intellectual inquiry into the varied nature of the world and the revolutions of mankind; the art of narration and analysis was carried very far; the *History of Charles XII* had appeared. Hume and Robertson, in a style in [illegible]
flue [illegible]
far [illegible]

Hume is aware of the link which in his opinion unites history with philosophy. The past contains the accumulated experience of the generations; an empirical wisdom will find in it the complement of the data which the present is able to offer; and from such source it will draw the most useful lessons with a view to what remains, after all, the true object of

[1] Twenty volumes, 1704–35.

science: rules of conduct. Appointed librarian to the Facul of Advocates in Edinburgh, he has at hand a precious ar copious collection of documents; he finds in them the materi for his *History of England*.[1]

Although he prides himself upon the fact that his assertio are always accompanied by proofs, and that he gives us t references of his texts, he does not carry the scientific scru of exactitude very far. His aim is to rise above even group them, judge them, and extract what they have to teac He looks upon the past from the point of view of a curio observer, who is penetrating, rather ironical, and no dou given to finding positive explanations for human acts. Th realism eliminates to too great an extent the moral factors history; but it emphasizes aspects of the course of things whi have hitherto been neglected—social causes, beside politic causes. The serenity to which Hume aspires, and which really does possess to a remarkable degree, is not without so coldness; and if he is free from all passion, he is not fr every prejudice. He has been reproached with having show in his account a decided preference, in principle, for the the of the king's prerogative. The Whigs accused him of writi as a Tory. He reveals, in fact, like Voltaire, an instincti weakness for order, and some mistrust towards the champio of public liberty, as well as towards those of the Purit religion. But the absolutism of the last sovereigns of t Stuart line is not any more to his liking.

While this work has lost all historical value to-day, it retai the merit of having raised the study of the past to the le of the highest literature. It has, without effort and qu naturally, the qualities of form—arrangement, orderliness, d nity of style, clearness of language. Above all, it displays breadth of view which gives the narration all its moral a philosophic import. His narrowness in certain respects, matters where the spirit of the time had not yet learned feel without prejudice, may shock us. Hume speaks of t Middle Ages without the sympathy which imagination p mits; he knows them but ill, and makes no attempt to impro his knowledge; all that is primitive or barbarous has scarc any interest for him; he has no premonition of the ra advance which is about to be made by the Romantic intuiti

[1] He treats, first of all, the reigns of James I and Charles I, then contin his account to the Revolution of 1688; after which he retraces his steps goes back to the origins of the nation.

of all early origins. His outlook has the precision, but also the limitations, of a rationalism which has not yet reaped sufficient benefit from repeated experience of the complexity of things. But in the normal and familiar plane of human affairs, he opens up a way for the interpretation of motive forces and the powers at work, in a word for the explanatory kind of history, which others after him will follow still further.

Robertson,[1] who like Hume is a Scotsman, achieves a speedier success among his compatriots by writing the history of Scotland. But his fame spreads immediately to England and the Continent. He has very serious merits; by the arrangement of his matter, the form, the clearness of his style, he recalls Hume, and in turn affords evidence of French influence.[2] He too has philosophical aims and ambitions. While his is not the penetrating vigour of Hume, he shows an even superior sense of the correlation of facts. From the first the reader is struck by his prudence and taste for precision; he creates the impression of a very safe mind, fully equipped for the pursuit of truth. He has been charged with not [illegible] of documents, [illegible] by a rhetorical [illegible] which offers a general survey of the end of the Middle Ages, won many readers, down to the nineteenth century.

History, in its beginnings as a technical branch of writing, still presented an easy means of livelihood to authors who fared poorly in literature. Smollett and Goldsmith, after Hume, became historians in a secondary capacity; they [illegible] novel of manners was not less directly than moral philosophy [illegible]. In his [illegible][3] did not [illegible] a certain haste, while he does not bring the same vigour to bear in his [illegible]

[illegible]

interpretation of facts. His work is clear, however, lively, and reads pleasantly. It is because of the realism of his thought, together with his somewhat narrow but penetrating psychology, that Smollett occupies a rather honourable place among writers who had not as yet an exacting sense of the historical method.

The work of Goldsmith[1] is a series of familiar letters, supposed to have been written by a man of noble birth to his young son. The matter is almost entirely borrowed; but Goldsmith knows how to give judicious advice upon the study of history, and in a certain measure has done original work by adapting his narrative to the imagination of youth. He does not dare to grant full expression to his personality, and the charm of his style suffers somewhat from this constraint.

4. *The Essays of Hume and Goldsmith.*—The essays of Hume occupy an original place half-way between pure philosophy and the ethics of everyday life. They are more compact than the witty trifles or the jestings with a serious intent, after the fashion of the *Spectator*, or even the judicious but somewhat oratorical dissertations of Johnson. Although Hume wanted to tone down the too concentrated doctrine of his first work, his thought has too direct a motion, his style too great a clearness, for the expression ever to develop to any further length than what is strictly indispensable. These shorter writings, which are at times very brief, and always terse, are models of the difficult art, less English than French, of explaining in an easy way an analysis implying manifold and precise shades.

The subjects treated are of a very varied nature. If one passes over those which merely reiterate the ideas of the *Treatise of Human Nature*, the rest deal with political, economic, and social, or with moral and religious, or again with aesthetic and literary matters. The personality of Hume is here revealed more freely than in his chief works. It appears to be singularly intuitive and supple, beneath the cold and polished surface of a rational scepticism. Hume is a thinker of extreme perspicacity, endowed with a very fine sense of truth. This he owes to a keen and fresh perception, to a vigorous grasp of the elusive, obscure realities of collective life or of consciousness. Whether they treat of artistic

[1] *An History of England in a Series of Letters from a Nobleman to his Son*, 1764.

problems or
psychologist
essays. It is

objects belong to it, or whether it only reflects and them. And this wealth of moral knowledge, which g to the point of divination, is made accessible to all clearness, the self-possession of a serene intelligence one might perhaps reproach with an utter lack of feel did not wrap itself up in a kind of very sincere be Hume is the most complete type of 'intellectual' t eighteenth century in England has to offer us; but at t time he is none the less human.

Goldsmith has more inspiring warmth, even if in the intellectuality is not of so exacting a nature. should not undervalue his satirical remarks, or his re upon the society of his time. In very close touch

he imitates Voltaire; he denounces the accusatory Rousseau, but yet is influenced by him. The ideal plicity in accordance with nature—a principle of

temper a subtle mockery with pleasing archnes

a man of his day; the literary transition, the chang mood of minds, are taking place in him without b fully aware of them.

The best feature of these small treatises is to be four

...early seen at times in the memories borrowed by Goldsmith rom the years of his own past. As an essayist, he has much f the charm of Steele, with less youthfulness of heart, a per reflection, and a touch of melancholy. In thus taking once again the form created by the authors of the *Spectator*, imparts to it a vitality that is new, and yet in many respects t unlike what it was before.

5. *The Ethics of Everyday Life; the Letter-writers.*—The ser social relations which develop during the course of the hteenth century among the governing classes—the aris- racy and the upper middle order—create a more active rchange of ideas, and a more frequent human intercourse. England as in France, it is the age of the *salon*. This is to say that the differences between the two peoples do not e out in certain traits. The joy of conversation, in the of the English, is less frank and free, less sought after for wn sake. Most often it is fused with another interest— lly, political, or moral and religious. Though brilliant nalities, who combine feminine charm with vivacity of ect, also form in England the centre of these voluntary ations, the latter have not played the same part, or sed the same attraction as in France, whether because, to the rival influence of other and less refined pleasures, s gambling, the surroundings proved less favourable to or because the difficult reconciliation of good taste and lest spontaneity with the cult of intellectual things, the average less perfectly effected.

l intercourse in the English upper classes, however, is date similar to what it is in France. The life of ished groups has a polite and independent moral tone. use rationalism which colours manners and thought rone to assume the aspect of light irony, of scepticism, n cynicism. Far from the currents of Puritan of sentiment which are slowly extending their from the mass of the middle class to the whole body , the circles that are privileged by birth or fortune n to the end of the century a mode of living in which nizes the tradition of the Restoration, in an at- and more decorous form.[1]

...tic treatise of John Brown (1715–66), *An Estimate of the Manners s of the Times* (1757), according to which English society, for had only surface defects, reveals the persistence of an easy, optimism, in direct opposition to the Puritan view which con- nd as deeply corrupt.

This aspect of an age when classicism is becoming a spent power, whilst the moral forces which will replace it are steadily growing, is shown up particularly in the works of authors who take part in the life of the world, and who write for it, or

[illegible]

frame of mind in intimate harmony with it.

The most famous series of letters of this period have a common character; they express in the field of familiar moralizing, or of worldly intercourse, the spirit of a society eager for truth, greedy for pleasure, cosmopolitan in taste, secretly distrustful or hostile with regard to any enthusiasm or any rigorous discipline.

A thoroughly French figure in many respects, related to France by affinities and preferences, writing French as easily as English, Chesterfield[1] is well known in France; and the attitude of this educator towards the problems of conduct is too clearly defined not to have been everywhere and at once understood. He eliminates everything that is purely a matter of conscientious scruples; and only appeals to sentiment in the least possible measure. Social success is the aim proposed in life; the most fitting means of attaining it are recommended with unabashed frankness, and in the light of the considered experience of a man of the world. Politeness, accomplishments, the art of pleasing, the attractive qualities of personality and mind, have never been more happily defined. There is in these letters a shrewd sense of worldly life, and of the working of selfishness pitted against selfishness

[illegible]

that is truly classical, clear, without illusion, expressed in a language of perfect ease and naturalness. The cold, elegant cynicism which emanates from them has always repelled the

[illegible]

tender and ardently religious soul. But it is easy to exaggerate the unmoral note in Chesterfield. Under the gloss of culture, his temperament preserves a texture that is English enough. The art of living he teaches is that of the century, accepted without revolt, and explained without any attempt at disguise; but the man in Chesterfield has sides to his character that are genuinely amiable, simple, and sincerely affectionate.

Horace Walpole[1] is an historian of the second order, a distinguished amateur, capable of critical initiative (in his *Historic Doubts*), and by a mere whim a novelist, whose paradoxical work we shall study elsewhere.[2] It is through his letters that his fame remains living to-day. They offer us the most complete, varied, and animated picture of English life in the second half of the eighteenth century. Those he addresses to his friend, Sir Horace Mann, in residence at Florence, are a diary of and commentary upon the political and social affairs of his country. Without neglecting literature, he speaks more often of the arts, and especially of the court, the town, and Parliament. But nothing that takes place in Europe is indifferent to him; his travels take him to France and Italy; and by the breadth of his culture as of his interests, he eminently represents the cosmopolitanism of the higher social circles in this age.

The correspondence of Walpole is full of great talent; it is the work of a man of supple, varied interests, gifted for the fine and lively expression of ideas, and for that type of con-

[1] Horatio, son of the Prime Minister Sir Robert Walpole, born in 1717, studied at Eton and Cambridge, travelled on the Continent with his friend, the poet Gray, entered Parliament (1741), from which he retired in 1768. Long before this date, he devoted his attention to his residence at Strawberry Hill, building it in Gothic style, gathering in it a collection of works of art, establishing a printing press, etc.; during his frequent travels in France, he formed with Mme du Deffand a friendship which, with Walpole, does not seem to have been a love-affair. Becoming Earl of Orford in 1791, he died in 1797, leaving behind an enormous correspondence, which was published in fragments from 1798 onwards (ed. by Paget Toynbee, 16 vols., 1903). See *Supplement to the Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. by Toynbee, 1919; *Selection of the Letters*, ed. by W. S. Lewis, 1927. His miscellaneous works (5 vols., 1798, and afterwards increased to 9 vols.) comprise historical writings (republished since that date) on the reigns of the Hanoverian sovereigns, and his *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of Richard III*, 1768; a novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, 1764; a tragedy, *The Mysterious Mother*, 1768; *Some Anecdotes of Painting in England*, 1762, etc. His letters to Mme du Deffand were destroyed, and we have only those which she addressed to him (ed. by P. Toynbee, 3 vols., 1912). See A. Dobson, *Horace Walpole*, 1910; Greenwood, *Horace Walpole's World*, 1913; Yvon, *Horace Walpole*, 1924; idem, *Horace Walpole as a Poet*, 1924; D. M. Stuart, *Horace Walpole* (English Men of Letters), 1927.

[2] See Book IV, Chap. III.

versational writing which demands leisure, a rich experience, piquancy of mind, and a spirit of friendship. The pleasant vivacity of the form is sustained and directed by a discreet endeavour and an intentional aim. Walpole admired Madame de Sévigné too much not to try wittingly to imitate her. If he spoke French poorly, he knew French literature well, and while the influence of France upon his style may have been exaggerated, his letters, nevertheless, are polished by that international refinement of thought and language in which the share of France is recognizable before all others. ... nimble, rapid, and brilliant ... to him ...

less, and o...

wh... cor... phi...

... guage at times mocking a ... but on the other hand a sincerity, a modesty as to the most intimate sentiments, a real faculty of affection, an aristocratic scorn for the sufferings of a life that was not altogether light to bear. His conduct towards Madame du Deffand—whom he treated at first with respect, esteem, and a little irony, then with a stronger and warmer attachment, still tempered by the fear of ridicule, and the feeling of the fragility of such a defiance to cold reason—is not such, as far as one can ascertain, as seriously to injure his memory, even if it is not altogether to his credit.

Mrs. Montagu[1] is one of the queens of the Blue Stockings.

[1] Elizabeth Robinson, daughter of a Yorkshire squire, born in 1720, after a brilliantly precocious youth married in 1742 Edward Montagu, of noble descent and great wealth, but devoid of talent. She formed the centre of an elegant and cultured society, and kept a *salon* in London until the last years of the century; she died in 1800. Her *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare* (1769) was a reply to the criticisms of Voltaire. The first part of her correspondence was published in 4 volumes (1809–13); the second was utilized by J. Doran in his book, *A Lady of the Last Century* (1873); and by R. Blunt (*Mrs Montagu, her Letters and Friendships from 1762 to 1800*), 1923. See P

'e termed at this date in England those ladies who were :nough not to hide their wit and culture.[1] The energy riginality implied in such audaciousness would of course it to them a sometimes excessive reaction against the ite effacement which use and opinion imposed upon n; and the term by which they are known reveals in . with regard to them a slightly irreverent feeling. But is hardly any pedantry in these wives and mothers nilies, who are smitten with the love of literature and edge, no more than there is any real preciosity either; int traces of affectation are compensated for by a *; sense and by the unexceptionable seriousness of their* of living. The doubtful reputation of a Mrs. Behn or . Manley leaves a Mrs. Vesey, a Mrs. Delany, a Mrs. wen perfectly immune; on the other hand, it is too evident his English replica of the French *salons* owes to a rather ent social and intellectual tone a less spontaneous charm, communicative grace.

. Montagu possesses, however, a very witty verve. Of anced, almost cold nature, she strikes rather than ts the reader by the quality of her gifts. Her very letters already show an extraordinary vivacity and ency; and to the end her writing retains its balance, its ess, its ease of style. She cultivates her talent, and not always avoid the error of abusing it; the virtue of a ng simplicity is not one of her merits; her correspondence, equal interest, has now lost its freshness of appeal. Yet ll contains valuable descriptions of manners, and the re of an intelligent, brilliant, sensible woman, reasonable ;h to temper her caustic exuberance with a wise and ent art of living.

spite the relative dryness of her moral temperament, Mrs. agu has a keen appreciation of the greatness of Shake- e, even if she has no liking for his poetry; she defends ights of his creative genius, and shows up the errors of ire, with an entire freedom of judgment as to the dogmas ssicism. In the same way, Horace Walpole, more out ellectual curiosity than from any sentimental contagion, his place one day among the creators of the pre-Roman- ovel. Indeed from now onwards there are very few

[1] r the probable origin of this phrase—at first applied to a man, and ting the unceremonious carelessness in dress of one whose sole concern itellectual elegance, see *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. ap. XV.

writers who do not more or less reveal the commingling of tendencies, and the close association of the new desires with traditional rationalism.

[illegible]

Yvon, *Horace Walpole*, 1924.

BOOK IV—THE PRE-ROMANTIC PERI

(1770–98)

CHAPTER I

THE AWAKENING OF IMAGINATION

1. *Psychological Sources, and the Trend of Ideas.*—
thirty years of the eighteenth century can be consi
being in themselves, and without too artificial an arra
of the facts, a separate period in the study of Englis
ture. They are naturally linked with those which h
preceded them; in the course of the long transition
finally to lead to Romanticism, they form, as it were,
stage, and thus a continuation of the first. At the sa
they possess a quality of their own, because the sig
go to show that a moral and literary change is about to
that a new age is soon to announce itself, are ever in
and relatively more numerous. If the general
thought during these years is somewhat mixed, still
see that the psychological elements whose growth is
the future are henceforth sufficiently powerful to a
dominant part; they outnumber other element
influence lies in the opposite direction. Thus, if a
be sought to characterize this period, it is best suppli
age which follows, and towards which it obviously ten
be appropriately termed the 'pre-Romantic' period.

It owes its distinctive character, primarily, to the
the awakening of imagination reinforces and comp
renascence of feeling. From the one movement o
naturally and easily to the other. In the normal
things, the desire to feel will impart a certain stimul
faculty which evokes and combines various kinds o
especially those images of an intense and rare nature
latter is to be found one of the most potent sources of
Their suggestive quality is sought after, not only for
because it rarely manifests its presence without, at
time, sending an awakening thrill through all the fib

sensibility. The attractive charm of visions borr
the storied past, from distant climes, from all that

an inevitable and prompt working of the law th
the renewal of its inner resources. The one cann
exploited, nor indeed put to its best use, unless th
called upon to intervene.

There is already evidence, during the preceding
the imaginative awakening about to take place in th
letters; it is to be seen to a certain extent in the p

mysterious—in a word, the quest after a world of
that is removed from daily reality and the more im

poetry by being removed in space. But much more
the past that is conjured up in the mind, whether it

slumbering recesses of the mind, or hidden in the dust-covered books of time. It was more simple to recall this past, to infuse it, as it were, with vital interest, than to set about the planning and building of a wholly new civilization.

But what chiefly matters is that in the need of the soul for moral alienation from the present, more was included than a mere craving for an artificial change in the pictorial setting of life. There was also a keen desire for spiritual relief, which thus links up the awakening of imagination with an earlier movement, the awakening of sentiment. The past is not only felt as a period apart; it stands in direct conflict with the present, acts as a reactionary force, symbolizing the spirit of protest and revenge. It will have nothing whatever to do with the present in the very sense in which contemporary thought most clearly manifests itself. Now, the age is one of dry reasoning, when all the vitality of life seems to be on the ebb; so, the soul will turn towards the past, in order to find the contentment so necessary to the cravings of its emotional nature. And of all the varied periods which such a past has to offer, that which affords the greatest satisfaction will be the first to be explored.

It may thus be said that the renascence of imagination consisted above all in the literary and artistic discovery of the Middle Ages; these came to be revealed because of the interest people began to take in them, and this very interest was the expression of a deeper need of the sensibility. The visible elics of this great epoch, and the traces it had left in the ollective memory of mankind, showed it to be an age of faith, f the picturesque, of simplicity, and of strong appeal; no more as needed by an inner aspiration capable in itself of creating, ill further of transforming, its own object. The relics of the st were examined and explained; the cult of memory be- me a hallowed art. The Middle Ages lived again as a riod of faith, of picturesqueness, of simplicity, of pathos, of that lacked in a century of rational lucidity, at the heart of ich was growing the tedium, and even the disgust, of itself. he passionate idealization of the Middle Ages was, as ays, the work of a strong desire whose whole aim is towards quest for its own fulfilment. In this renascence any historical intention, any scruple of truth or desire for iseness, was of little or no account. The past was defined pictured by mental faculties to which veracity of detail rrelevant. The one main idea was that the past should

differ from the present; and as the present was the very antithesis of the intense, exuberant, and romantic civilization of the English Renascence, it thus came about that no difference was made between the Renascence and the Middle Ages. The one epoch merged into the other, was evoked with it, and received the same attention.

If we search deeply enough in the history of these thirty years, we shall find that what really takes place is the re-awakening of a former state of the national mind; and it is only because they are recognized as familiar things that bygone centuries, with their manners, their mental and moral rhythms, and their concrete forms, acquire any real value. The sympathy which is extended to things of the past is based upon the belief that once upon a time there actually existed the various modes of sensibility which are now being sought after, and that it is within the limits of reason that they can again assert themselves. It is a phase, one might say, in its own inner evolution, that the national spirit perceives and approves of in the imaginative return to the past. The Middle Ages are hailed as a reality, once alive, and whose revived existence is now to be mysteriously but closely interwoven with the life of the present. It is as if the consciousness of the period were stirred at the same time with the enchanting

awakening of imagination explains the very mixed nature as well as the great inequality of the elements which are the formative forces in the new movement. One central demand, the origin of literary changes then under way, was satisfied by various stimulating influences, whether those of different epochs in the past, or of different provinces in the realm of imagery.

To say that influences such as these had never before been felt would be misleading. They had, at times, been active, but the moral atmosphere that was necessary to do them justice was not sufficiently prepared to co-operate in the development. The seventeenth century was not without some knowledge of the Middle Ages, as early as the opening years of the following century there was an increasing response to their attraction. Dryden, Pope, and Addison were

of Macpherson is permissible. As a writer, he has not the modern scruples about literary property; he has an aim in [illegible]

should collaborate with the texts, and even use his inventiveness in repairing the ravages of time. When reconstructing in its entirety an incomplete image, or, if need be, putting a polish to what an uninstructed taste has left undone, Macpherson is not a mystifier in the ordinary sense of the term. He is carried away by [illegible] obeys the impatience c[illegible] *keen sense of the neec*[illegible] success.

Macpherson[1] is essentially a man of his time, stirred as are his contemporaries with a moral disquietude that is in search of some object of worship; and while this accounts for the success of the Ossianic tales, there is also another important element contributing to that success: the part played by the classics, whose prestige interweaves itself with the illusion which the whole work was to create. The epic of *Fingal*, according to the critic Blair, conforms to the canons of Aristotle. Scottish pride, forgetting the Irish origin of the legend, proudly manifested its joy that a Celtic Homer should

[1] James Macpherson (1736–96) was a Highlander by birth and a schoolmaster and private tutor by profession. His early poetry showed distinct classical tastes. Encouraged by Home and Blair, he adapted or invented certain *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* after the poems of old Irish cycles which [illegible]

have conferred such glory upon the far distant pas Caledonia. The *Iliad* as understood by the eightee century reader supplied the model for *Fingal*. But only model; and the little influence if did have upon the wor Macpherson will not explain the tremor of excitement w greeted for many a long day the reading of his cadenced pr nor the fascination it held over the imagination of Eur There emanated from the themes collected by Macphe a veritable force, the effect of which he knew well hov multiply by means of his skilful art, together with the tuitional gift of a deep sense of poetic values.

It matters little if the figure of Ossian or the pictorial re sentation of his universe be a creation of the most fictit fancy; if the tales are a strange blending of legendary lore simple sentimental conviction. Thrown as they were, f 1760 onwards, into the midst of a seething Romanticism, t brought with them the powerful leaven of a visionary me choly. The central motive of these poems is the path sense of regret for what once has been; they pass in re the glorious imagery of bygone days; and they touch u the sadness of modern times. These sentiments are g dramatic form in a number of moving incidents, wl decorative setting is placed in a wild and fascinating l of mists, of torrents, and of rocks. To a type of reader by now was thoroughly bored with all the dry precisio classicism, and who was keenly desirous of experiencing caressing sense of vague indefiniteness, the landscape of Ossianic page brought with it the softness of a pain in grisaille, a sublimity suggestive of the infinite. M pherson's art is an important contribution to this qualit style so essentially romantic; he developed, accentuated, introduced a greater tenderness into what was but summa indicated in the bardic fragments. So that the 'Celtic m is thus to a great extent the creation of modern sensibi working on the simple suggestions offered by the anc characteristics of the race.

Above all, Macpherson knew how to imbue his epic p with the rhythm of song, to give it a cadenced flow that wa once expressive and stately, and which harmonized with grandeur and emotion of the theme; to arrange his recita into paragraphs which take the place of stanzas, and to c struct each sentence according to a periodic measure of sol meditative tone, which is none other than that of the Eng

Bible itself. One cannot therefore say that the ear or the soul of his reading public was unprepared for such a music; there was a certain analogy that was dimly perceived, and proved so effective that the epic which Macpherson declared to be primitive, and whose fragments he dated to the third century, acquired something of the majesty of the Scriptures.

The development of Ossianism in Europe was destined to become [illegible] exerci[illegible] Europe[illegible] peculiar to the rhythm of the Ossianic poems was to leave its mark upon the work of several generations.

3. *Percy and Chatterton.*—The *Reliques* of Percy [1] (1765) show the direct influence of the suggestive themes of older English poetry. The taste of the crowd had altered but little towards the 'ballads' or poems of popular inspiration, with their [illegible] mour—for this reason, perha[illegible] and simple flow, while the r[illegible] gained an easy hold upon the memory. But with the civil wars a deteriorating effect was wrought upon this kind of poetry, which, until then, had retained to a great extent its vital interest; the most ancient of the ballad themes, with their robust and naïve simplicity, began to disappear save in the more remote country districts; the national heritage was unknown in the circles of the learned or in fashionable society. Already, however, *from the time of Addison to that of Gray, there comes into* existence a small *élite* whose interest is awakened in the ancient forms of poetry; and a few publications of some of the ancient texts [2] begin to revive them.

Percy is not uninfluenced by Macpherson, he claims that the minstrels of the English Middle Ages are the posterity of the Celtic bards. From Addison, too, he derives some encouragement: *Chevy Chase*, a sensational discovery of the *Spectator*, is given a prominent place in the *Reliques*. Like Macpherson,

[illegible]

though more sparingly, he takes liberties with the texts. His collection is a medley where the old jostles the new; the language of the ballads is most often modernized, and whole stanzas are thrown in with a view to bridging over the abrupt transitions in the narrative. Whilst Percy has a feeling as well as a respect for the touching, naïve pathos of these early themes, he does not dare to accept the bold directness of the popular taste; he must needs bring it somehow under the principles of classical art: Homer's precedent is called upon to justify it.

Percy's collection is thus far from representing either perfection in the matter of choice, or exactitude in reproduction. But such discrepancies count for little in this revival of romance, which is not concerned with scientific scruples—in fact is opposed to them. It is only on the surface that this revival arises from certain well-defined suggestions; these, after all, are mere pretexts, the means rather than causes; and the more these means are pliable and amenable to influences, the more easily the movement spreads its activities. The liberties which Percy took with his texts have been to the advantage of his initiative. For the first time the essential features of popular poetry of ancient days were brought to the notice of the educated reader. The instinct that had been blindly groping after regeneration in literature was now able to find what it was seeking in these pages; and such, in the long run, proved to be the case. They brought a salutary feeling of rejuvenation to the sensibility of a public grown tired of all the false nobility of diction and intensity of language. Here was to be found a spontaneity replete with energy. An archaic note, the more acceptable for being sober, and a simple style of expression, pointed the way to a renovation of literary taste. The resulting effect was as deep as it was lasting. For a whole age the strong rhythmic flow of the ballad form, together with the arresting appeal of the repeated phrases, was to exert an obscure influence over the literary instincts of the English people; and with the advent of Romanticism we shall find this influence rising to the surface, assimilated and transformed, but still recognizable, and permeating literature in many and diverse ways.

In the case of Chatterton [1] we have an example rather than

[1] Thomas Chatterton, born at Bristol in 1752, was bound to an attorney. The Middle Ages began to fascinate him at an early date; he wrote modern poems, and imitations in the old style, which he attributed to an imaginary author of

an instrument of the growing hold of imagination over the intellectual life of the time, as of the fascination of medievalism over imagination itself. If he deceived many of his readers, his archaisms, as laboured as they are naïve, did not succeed in finding acceptance with the more enlightened among his contemporaries. The century which followed saw through the imposture, and unravelled all the means he used to gain his end. When all is said, his psychological case remains very significant. In certain respects he is the most romantic man of his age; his childhood is one long series of obsessing dreams, which unbalance any developing sense he may have

which he was brought up, instilled within him a longing for

of expression, an atmosphere of feeling, and an easy musical flow, but they lack originality. His pastiches of ancient poetry, with their composite language, their uncertain spelling, leave upon one an impression of strangeness, not unmixed

metrical values.

In his epoch he was little else than a flitting apparition, a

the fifteenth century, Rowley. He tried to gain the patronage of Walpole and failed; then endeavoured to make a living in London by his pen, and all resources failing him, poisoned himself in his eighteenth year (1770). *Poetical*

Romantic writers, especially in France, he was to be hail the symbol of poetic destiny, in its unequal struggle opposing reality.

4. *The Historians and Critics.*—The revival of rom however, was also aided in another direction by a more knowledge of the past, and here the poets are replaced b historians and critics. But this in not a question o history or rational criticism.

The school of Hume and Robertson, like that of Joh had evinced no sympathy with the Middle Ages, and at had even shown an ill-disguised disdain for them. O contrary, with such men as yielded willingly to the spi enthusiasm and sympathy, the Dark Ages, which stre back beyond the glory of the Renascence years and the of an ornate, well-balanced classicism, were again in with life; they were regarded with veneration, and it acknowledged that they had a distinct and attra charm.

Richard Hurd[1] is by no means a revolutionary; his opi and conscious doctrine differ in no way from those of an c dox classicist. But in matters pertaining to literatu allows himself the freedom of feeling. His intuition ha him unwittingly to accept principles which in themselv subversive, and he enunciates them without recognizing true nature. He deprecates the idea of having only model upon which to base good taste; he accepts an pendent order of 'Gothic' beauty, which the progre enlightenment may have outgrown, but whose legitimac never been destroyed. He thus takes up arms in beh originality and character as values in themselves; he to recognize the claims of the supernatural and of a bel things unseen that escape the sway of reason.

The Warton family[2] is associated with the literary re

[1] 1720–1808. Appointed Bishop of Worcester; *Letters on Chival Romance*, 1762; ed. Morley, 1911.

[2] The father, Thomas Warton, was professor of poetry at Oxford duri earlier years of the century, and contributed in restoring Milton to a p honour in English literature. His elder son, Joseph (1722–1800), pu odes (1746), edited the works of Pope (1797); after having already cont an *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*, 2 vols., 1756–82. The y son, Thomas (1728–90), was also a poet (see above, Book III, Chap. II, se and the author of *Observations on the Faerie Queene of Spenser*, 1754; a *History of English Poetry from the Close of the Eleventh to the Commence the Eighteenth Century*, 1774–81 (ed. Hazlitt, 1871). See Dennis, *The W* 1876 (Studies in English Literature); C. Rinaker, *Thomas Warton*,

of respect for the past in national tradition; from the father to

[illegible]

ardour of a manifesto. In it he attacks the accepted view of the superiority of the rational poet, and lays down as a prin-

[illegible]

towards the Romantic ideal long before the new poetry has finally defeated the old. The question raised in the quarrels between the ancients and the moderns had been solved, to all intents and purposes, by the victory of the former; but the modern idea persisted in a latent state; it grew active again just before the close of the classical era. In opposition to the accepted doctrine of direct imitation in art, it upheld the rights of originality, putting forward the claims of genius, that is to say, maintaining that the artist should be free to imagine and to create in absolute independence. Three years before the publication of the *Essay on Pope*, Hogarth the painter expressed a similar idea in connection with pictorial art;[1] ar [illegible]
Young, [illegible]
from th [illegible]
jectures [illegible]
coming effort of the Romantic movement towards complete emancipation.

The *History of English Poetry* which Thomas Warton left is a work of singular conception. Planned on too large a scale, it tends to be diffuse, and is unfinished, while its wealth of erudition, remarkable certainly for the epoch, is seriously incomplete. It owes its permanent value to the sincere respect it shows for those ages which were conveniently classed as barbarian, to the clearly expressed notion of a continuous historical development, and lastly to the author's intuitive sense of national origins, and of the relationship

[1] *The Analysis of Beauty, written with a View of fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste*, 1753.

[2] *Conjectures on Original Composition, in a Letter to the Author of Sir Charles*

hich exists between the literature of a people and it
vilization.

To Tyrwhitt,[1] a contemporary of the Wartons, m
credited the honour of having revealed the real Chau
e Canterbury Tales. He discovered the secret of his m
d of the harmony of his verse, thus succeeding where D
l failed. From now onwards the charm of a poet
lier date than the Renascence was brought withi
ch of every reader.

he revival of romance, however, was extending its
ctivity in other directions. Curiosity had already
kened with regard to the East and to those lands w
eyond the seas, and this new interest was daily increas
ct, the eighteenth century is second only to the sixte
epoch of exploration and fascinating tales of travel.
clime the mysterious secret of the world was be
rated, and yet there remained ample room for fr
very, so that the spirit of adventure and the intrepid
explorer lost nothing of their former glamour.[2]
hin geographical limits that were more familiar Johns
sited the Hebrides; Gray the Lake District; Smolle
erne the less-known corners of France and Italy; whi
g reached Portugal only to make it his grave. The lu
e remote and stranger lands had greater attractio
n of letters. In *Rasselas* Johnson described a
ia of his own invention; the *Vathek* of Beckford [3] in it
erweaves picturesque descriptions with allegorical an
lusions; but here the wealth of imagination revels in
display, and this oriental tale, built up of the flimsy
so delicate a dream, would be a lovely thing if only
or had had to the end the courage of artistic

ling for nature, which has been growing stronger and

Tyrwhitt (1730–86): *The Canterbury Tales of Chaucer, to which is
ay on his Language and Versification, etc.*, 1775–8.
atives of Cook appeared from 1768 to 1784; those of James Bruce
iscover the Sources of the Nile*) in 1790; those of Hawkesworth in
n 1774–8 was published *The World Displayed, a Curious Collection
d Travels, with Introductions by Samuel Johnson*, 20 vols., etc.
eckford (1760–1844): *The History of the Caliph Vathek, etc.*, first
ench (1782); published in an English translation, revised by the
6; published in the original French text, Paris and Lausanne,
ll Abbey, a fancy Gothic edifice of great size, was built by him.
Life and Letters of William Beckford, 1910; Beckford's Travel
G. Chapman, 1928; M. May, *La Jeunesse de William Beckford
on Vathek*, 1928; *Vathek, etc.*, ed. by G. Chapman, 1929.

stronger since the previous age, is closely connected with this renascence of imagination. The beauty of the countryside, still treated in a very general way, by writers whose emotional style is detrimental to careful delineation, is now tending to become a popular subject in literature. But after the nature-painting of Thomson and Gray there would have been little evidence of any real progress, had not Thomas Pennant [1] visited Scotland and Wales, and made careful note of his impressions; or Gilpin,[2] as the pioneer of a new art, drawn attention to the individual physiognomy of trees and plants, and to the infinite veriety of aspects in the ever-changing scenes of wild nature. The spirit of keenness in the observation of the latter writer is a foretaste of the religion of Ruskin.

5. *The Rôle of Literary Deception.*—The 'pleasures of imagination' as sung by Akenside [3] had been not so much the expression of real feeling as the embodiment of certain abstract convictions, recorded in true classical style. Now, however, came the epoch when such 'pleasures' represented the joys of actual experience, and could be indulged in by every one.

impulse had any real value; on the contrary, the world of the past and the life in distant lands were better understood and appreciated, and had a greater charm of attraction, the more actual fact became interwoven with legendary lore The various realms of fancy were conquered one after another by literary cheats, or the authors of pious falsifications. Macpherson, Chatterton, and Percy himself showed how, through the spell wrought by a powerful inner feeling which pours its own wealth over distant objects, poetry does indeed

of mystery and fear. When Walpole penned his *Castle of Otranto* (1764), the first tale of terror, he wrote as a sceptic,

[3] See above, Book III, Chap. I, sect VI.

and for readers who eagerly lent themselves to the deceit of his invention.[1]

To be consulted: Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century*, 1899; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chap. X; K. Clark, *The Gothic Revival*, 1928; Dennis, *The Wartons* (Studies in English Literature), 1876; O. Elton, *A Survey of English Literature, 1780–1830*, 2nd ed., 1920; Farley, *Scandinavian Influences on the English Romantic Movement*, 1903; Hustvedt, *Ballad Criticism in Scandinavia and Great Britain during the Eighteenth Century*, 1916; Hurd, *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, 1762 (ed. Morley, 1911); E. W. Manwaring, *Italian Landscape in Eighteenth Century England, etc.*, 1925; M. May, *La Jeunesse de Beckford, etc.*, 1928; J. J. Mayoux, *Richard Payne Knight et le Pittoresque*, 1932; Phelps, *The Beginning of the English Romantic Movement*, 1893; Van Tieghem, *Ossian en France*, 1917; idem, *Le Mouvement romantique (Angleterre, etc.)*, new ed., 1923; idem, *Le Préromantisme*, 1924; Theodore Watts-Dunton, *The Renascence of Wonder in Poetry* (*Chambers's Cyclopaedia of English Literature*, vol. iii), 1903.

[1] See below, Chap. III.

CHAPTER II

THE RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

1. *The Direct or Distant Influence of Methodism.*—The rebirth of imagination is above all perceptible in general literature, in which it finds its most direct outlet of expression. At the same time, however, there develops another movement, no less profound, whose centre of action lies in the domain of religious beliefs. This awakening will also furnish one of the sources of the Romantic revival, but it will be a hidden source. In its early stages it concerns only a very limited set of university people; then its widening influence stretches farther afield to the masses, who are but distantly connected with culture; only later and by slow degrees does it work its way *upward to the upper classes, and permeate them in their turn.* Besides, without showing any animosity to art in general, as did Puritanism at an earlier date, it nevertheless favours a certain spiritual austerity, a rigorous code of morals which, it must be admitted, are hardly compatible with the exercise of artistic pursuits. For diverse reasons such as these, the new creed had no immediate or widespread effect upon literature.

It did, however, exercise an influence that was as great as it was productive.
and principal form of
general attitude of mi
which life brings in its train. The outcome itself of certain unfathomable psychological needs and of a secret agitation in the national conscience, it came in its turn to react as a stimulating emotional force upon the sensibility of the people

imagination; and there had to be a rekindli
regeneration of the whole inner soul. Roma
idealistic zeal which in part inspired it, owe s
new exaltation in religious sentiment.

Apart from this general action, by far the
Methodism on the one hand, and the keene
presence aroused in the Anglican Church o
exercise a well-defined influence on certain wr

These, in this respect, can be conveniently
since they form a group that found the real
literary vocation in a faith whose impregnati
gospel of Methodism.

2. *Wesley.*—The founder of Methodism is t
figure, and the written evidence of his aposto
an interest, not to be given a place in the hi
literature.

John Wesley [1] is, first and foremost, an irra
mysticism. Thus the rebirth in matters reli
eighteenth century springs from a regeneratio
a psychological impulse analogous to that
slowly awakening a new interest in nature,
revive art. The creed of the Deists, the ra
the philosophers, the apologetics of Butler, a
orthodoxy of the multitude, all found them
with a new tone of the national conscience,
ligence or by a more developed sense of prac
traceable to the faculty of intuition.

As usually happens in such a case, the odd
of the belief whose vital force is greater; its
until the day when its efficacy becomes e
is replaced by some other intuition. It can
there is any real originality in the belief up

[1] John Wesley, born in 1703, was a student and later
versity; became the central figure in a group of young men
earned for them the name of Methodists. He dated his c
of a mystical experience—from 1738; but already befo
entered upon a career which made him break away from
and caused him to become, against his will, the founder o
into rival branches. His whole life was spent in trave
writing; despite hardships and even dangers he carried on
zation among the poorer classes in Great Britain and in t
He died in 1791. *Works*, 32 vols., 1771–4; *Journal*, ed.

dism is founded—indeed, it is only part of a long trad
handed down through successive generations of Chri
mystics. The immediate inspirers of Wesley are William
and the Moravian Brethren, with whom he has pers
relations. But to this inspiration he brings the gift o
indefatigable strength of will, an unequalled power of real

Wesley was
cared to be
igion, the pr
ring it intelli
to the masses, have only an incidental value which
passed with its day. But the hymns he translated, and w
are for the most part from the German, have the flo
fervent devotion, while his diary, so full of the person

the gift of leadership that were required, to maintain

ment of the artisan classes, are made clearer. But the
still more by way of revelation. All the psychology
religious revival, the influences contributing to its prepara
the scenes of conversion, the contagious power of its influ
over whole masses of the people, the spiritual anxiety

His style is forcible, clear, sober, and devoid of all rhetorical embellishment, although there is perceptible a veiled trace of classical scholarship reminiscent of university teaching. It can be humorous, even ironical, as occasion demands, but on the whole it maintains a straightforwardness and simplicity of expression prompted by one desire: to record, in a spirit of sincere humility, the truth of a daily experience raised by the revelation of the Divine to an infinite worth.[1]

The social influence of Methodist ideas in England cannot be overestimated; in fact, it represents a kind of crusade among the lower classes, to whom it brings the benefit of a moral culture, at the same time that it pleads their cause by appealing to the sympathetic interests of all. In this, its action may therefore be compared with that of the Christian Socialist movement of the nineteenth century. By strengthening the sense of civic solidarity, by bringing the prestige of religious faith to bear in appeasing the smouldering discontent of a new working class, whom modern industry had brought into existence, Methodism has contributed in making the established order of things more fundamentally secure. To it in part is due the saving of England from the contagion of French revolutionary ideas.

3. *The Friends and Opponents of Methodism.*—The age which witnessed the rise and growth of the Methodist movement regarded itself as still a rational one; so that the quieter minds of the time (not to speak of the hostile attitude of the orthodox) would openly gibe at the zeal of these believers. During the last sixty years or so of the century, the controversy which Methodism aroused became an aspect of the broader history of literature. It was considered good taste to rail against this new body of fanatics; and if we turn to the theatre or the novel, we find innumerable allusions of an aggressive or contemptuous character.

But the spirit of enthusiasm which animated the Methodist teaching, and which was very often justified by the sluggish attitude of the clergy themselves, was not without a certain contagious influence even on those who attacked the move-

[1] Other apostles of Methodism must be briefly mentioned: Charles Wesley (1707–88), brother of John, whose many hymns are still sung, and who in several of them shows true poetic inspiration; George Whitefield (1714–70), the most moving of the orators, and a favourite disciple, until the day when his Calvinism brought him into strife with the master; John William Fletcher, of Franco-Swiss origin; Augustus Toplady, etc.

ment. The most noteworthy of the satires, that of Graves,[1] is much less virulent than it pretends to be; in *The Spiritual Quixote* we see the reaction of a moderate man, ineffusively sentimental, whose quiet moralizing temper inveighs against the over-ardent spirit of a crusade that would seem, in certain ways, to outdistance his own religious conceptions. The bitter verve even of a Smollett is in its turn made more human by being brought into contact with Methodism, and his *Humphry Clinker* shows an involuntary respect for the humble convert to the new cause.

To pass from the negative to the positive influence of Methodist teaching is to recognize that the evidence, while less abundant, is of greater importance. With James Hervey,[2] or [illegible] fact that he did not pay them homage. On the contrary, Brooke[4] agrees with their doctrines to the point of finding in them a main source of inspiration. As a writer he is mediocre; a lover both of realism and of mysticism, he is inclined to be too communicatively eloquent—a feature which tends to mar the novel where he gives a picture of the century as he saw it, and describes a virtuous soul as it ought to be. But there is in his pages a strange admixture of rugged strength and enthusiasm.

4. *Cowper.*—A great poet, though not one of the greatest, is indebted in no small way to the religious revival of the

[1] Richard Graves, 1715–1804, one of the central figures in the social and literary group known as the 'Warwickshire Coterie,' which counted among its members Lady Luxborough, the poets Shenstone and Jago (see above, Book III, Chap. III, sect. v), etc. Certain moral affinities, of which the chief was perhaps the love of the quiet countryside, served as the bond of union. In 1772 he published *The Spiritual Quixote, or the Summer's Ramble of Mr. Geoffry Wildgoose* (new edition by Charles Whibley, 1926); in 1785, *Eugenius, or Anecdotes of the Golden Vale*, etc.

[2] See above, Book III, Chap. II, sect. ii. At Oxford he was the disciple of Wesley; later he joined the ranks of Whitefield and the Calvinists, a step which incensed his master and called forth an attack; but the *Meditations among the Tombs*, etc., are full of the fervour of Methodism.

[3] See above, Book III, Chap. II, sects. iii and iv.

[4] Henry Brooke (1703–83): *The Fool of Quality, or the Adventures of Henry, Earl of Moreland*, 1766–70; this novel, which Wesley abridged at a later date, combines the spirit of Rousseau's teaching with that of Methodism (ed. Baker, 1906). See above, Book III, Chap. I, sect. vi. The novel of John Moore, *Zeluco* (1786), with its philanthropic crusade against slavery, may be mentioned here as showing some affinities.

eighteenth century for part of the creative force of his spiration, and thus can be legitimately connected with it.

Methodism, it must be remembered, is not the only of this revival. In its turn it provokes in the ranks of Anglican clergy a counter-movement as spiritually zealou purpose as the other, and one which will continue to a itself in the following century: evangelicalism. It is du the direct influence of this second movement that Wil Cowper[1] is able to regain a certain sense of balance, de the depression that weighs down upon his soul and alien his reason; and to it also he owes the power of moral con tration which enables him to write. The work of Cowp a foretaste of the coming renovation in literature. In s respects his poetry furnishes a rough outline of what we find in that of Wordsworth. At the core of his poetical c there lies a faith, a healing principle, the fruit of pa experience. If he feels the craving for simplicity, possesses the courage to be simple, such a gift arises from feeling of kinship with mankind which personal suffering tended more and more to strengthen; it is also traceab the attitude he adopts of strict renunciation towards all is external and superfluous in life, an opinion based up mystic certitude, at least an intuitive one. And it was ju simplicity such as this, enriched and encouraged by the kn ledge of his own moral and artistic worth, that was requ

[1] William Cowper, born in 1731, the son of a country rector, was con with one of the branches of the noble family of the Coopers. He stud Westminster School and chose the law as his profession. The influence disappointed love and of a morbid timidity brought about an attack of ma during which he attempted suicide; upon recovery, he took up his ab Huntingdon in the home of his friends, the Unwins, who remained asso with him during his lifetime. He removed with them to Olney, where Ne a curate, and one of the outstanding figures in the evangelical move exerted a deep influence over him. It was at his request that Cowper borated in a collection of religious poems, the *Olney Hymns*, 1779. H still, however, an invalid, haunted by the thought of suicide. A se eight satires (*Table Talk*, *The Progress of Error*, *Truth*, *Expostulation*, *Charity*, *Conversation*, *Retirement*), suggested to him by Mrs. Unwin several shorter pieces, composed the volume of *Poems* of 1782. A friendship, that of Lady Austen, is the source of his principal work, *Th* (1785). Among other poems one may mention *Tirocinium* and *John C* He further translated Homer, Mme Guyon, etc., into verse; and died in *Works*, ed. Southey, 1853–5; *Poetical Works*, ed. Benham, 1870; ed. M 1911; *Correspondence*, ed. Wright, 1904; *Selected Letters*, ed. Lucas, 191 Frazer, 1912. See Sainte-Beuve, *Lundis*, vol. xi, 1868; Boucher, *W. C* 1874; Goldwin Smith, *Cowper*, 1880; S. A. Brooke, *Theology in the E Poets*, 1880; D. Cecil, *Life of Cowper*, 1929; H. Fausset, *William C* 1929. The autobiography of the Rev. J. Newton (*Out of the Depths* issued in a new edition by Hamilton in 1916.

at this epoch; through no other means could English poetry have freed itself from the obsessing influence of classical rhythms.

Although the points of inner resemblance are very close, and the two poets' strains at times strikingly similar, there is still a great gulf between Cowper and Wordsworth. By nature he is the weaker of the two, and so is more the victim of his moral disease, from which he never completely recovers. His thought lacks the initiative to rise to the heights of philosophic idealism from which the clearer vision can solve problems of art more decisively. Above all, in his youth, when the soul is open to influence, there is no French Revolution as in the case of Wordsworth, to bring in its train the shock of great revelations. His life pursues its course, still moulded by the social and literary traditions of the eighteenth century; he feels their weight, seeks to liberate himself, and, in a certain measure, succeeds. But it is too late that he sees,

His religious hymns have at times a fresh beauty of expression, a purity of thought that is truly inspired; but the lyric outburst of passionate zeal might have attained to greater heights; it is here controlled by a stern sense of piety, curbed by a measure regular to an excess, and made to conform to a

poetry.

In the poems of 1782 the trend of thought is obviously didactic. The various arguments of a thesis are worked out with explicit and laborious care; in fact, the classical ideal of a versified demonstration, a purely rational one, still leads its main characteristic to this branch of his work. Whole stretches of the development are merely arid, the sombre colouring of theological thought, together with the insistent tone of the moralizing, enhances our impression of prosaism.

But there is already a marked progress. While the language and rhythm may show no departure from conventional standards, the originality of the poet is everywhere in evidence. His convictions are of too strong a nature to be calmly expressed; the discussion is raised to a

higher plane, and his verse soars with impassioned eloquence. The form itself becomes animated; it abandons all the niceties of convention, and aims more at acquiring a spontaneous vigour and a perfect frankness, which, it must be admitted, are often achieved. Some of these poems, as, for example, *Expostulation*, where the call of conscience is more immediately perceptible, are in almost every line of superior merit. No longer is the poet the slave of the antithetic couplet of Pope, but as a metrist he reminds us rather of Churchill and Dryden. He can now give expression to his innermost feelings; his tone is still moralizing, but it is deeply loaded with emotion; and it is this assurance of absolute sincerity that lends to his verse a convincingly simple accent, in itself a precious contribution to literature.

The Task represents a further step towards independence, as the theme, an artificial one, readily lends itself to a fully fanciful development. There is again evidence of the desire to convince and instruct, but the poem is essentially the the expression of a soul; and the free effusion of modern lyricism is the ideal that secretly attracts and guides it. The seasons and the aspects of an ever-changing nature furnish, as it were, the setting to this inner life. The art of Cowper may be less skilled, less polished and supple than that of Thomson, but it has something that is more robust; just as his sensibility which, at times, can be described as almost feminine, has here, however, the suggestion of greater strength. His verse possesses a felicity difficult to define; an individual charm, which emanates directly from the soul, and to which contribute the faculty of feeling and thinking with noble, beautiful breadth, the gift of expressing thought with a delicacy at once original and picturesque, or, as the case may be, with a strength of concision and spirited forcefulness. Here he shows himself a master in the art of blank verse, with a very accurate sense of the rhythmic flow best suited to this particular form of prosodic eloquence.

Among his numerous short poems there are several in which the spirit of ecstasy is equal to the highest Romanticism, and the emotion of serene wonder may be compared with Wordsworth's. But, generally speaking, the inspiration is sober and homely, with a flavour of malice, a petulant humorous gaiety, and at times a touch of the naïve.

By the combination of all the elements which constitute his style, Cowper reminds us of the past, no less than he suggests

the future. Steeped in the classics, he writes Latin verse, translates Homer and Horace. In his happier moments, not the most [illegible] inspiration [illegible] both the emotion and the form—he creates a genuinely classical expression; his verse then has all the power and conciseness of simplicity, without the laboured artifice that is [illegible] clear attention.

But Cowper is not a poet whose sole aim is to reproduce the minute notings of his mind. His poetry breathes a sympathy which shows a long association with the world of reality, an intimate knowledge of its ways It is a poetry of the home, set amid the peaceful surroundings of a green countryside, so typically English, its atmosphere is that of a national tradition revived and fully conscious of its worth. It extols religion, morality, the family, the fatherland, in the spirit of a middle class which no longer hesitates to assert its own preferences against those of aristocratic taste The themes it treats of are still commonplaces, but they represent the elementary truths of the heart, rather than of intelligence. Its quiet effusion is full of a tender pity, whether it pleads the cause of the prisoner, or the slave, or the dumb animal. Its trend is far from being revolutionary, even if it seeks to make sentiment a guiding rule in social intercourse It virtually contains humanitarianism, and the radical application of Christian ideas to daily life. Its love for nature has not the ardour of passion, but a keen though subdued warmth, and feeds on the freshest perceptions.

All those elements will later be found in the making of Romanticism itself. And as Cowper shows us, moreover, a [illegible] balance and health, it is possible to place him, if his personality be viewed as a whole, among the immediate predecessors of the Lake poets.

His letters have a most attractive charm, a most real sincerity. They are devoid of the slightest affectation as of the

the new method of artistic expression, which resulted from the development of the technique of sentiment.

The shrewd were first in the field; and here again the preparation in literature of the coming of Romanticism is through its early stages consciously artificial. The transformation longed for in style is yet so slow a process that men of letters with a gift of discernment take it upon themselves to satisfy this need, even by the most superficial means. Intellectually alert and clear-sighted, they also experience what others feel, but not to a greater degree. Thus with Walpole, the creator of the novel of terror, it is not so much an exceptional susceptibility to emotion which prompts his pen, as a distinct sense of what is wanted in literature, coupled with a bold, versatile mind.

In the process of its development, this particular kind of novel goes through the stage of sentimentalism; it is the cultivation of feeling for its own sake that in turn leads to the search for the semi-morbid forms of emotion. The systematic enjoyment of intense feeling brings about a complete moral inversion: the love of that pleasing kind of mental suffering, a sense of terror skilfully suggested. In this respect the work of Mackenzie,[1] although posterior in date by several years and very different from that of Walpole, must nevertheless be directly connected with it.

Mackenzie had no original talent. He is the disciple of Sterne, and owes much to Rousseau. His best-known novel —*The Man of Feeling*—is mediocre. It is a deliberate imitation of the *Sentimental Journey*; but the discontinuity which Sterne, with his exquisite feeling for nuance and detail, had transformed into a resource of art, here loses its value, and nothing redeems the thinness of the theme. The psychology also is lacking in subtlety; there is no complication with the hero of Mackenzie; he becomes the easy defenceless victim of the paralysing emotion which sensitiveness experiences at every turn of life. For the world, as Rousseau made out, is here the triumph of a cruel corruption; and the soul that

[1] Henry Mackenzie, born at Edinburgh in 1745, studied law and became a member of the brilliant literary society of the Scottish capital. He published three novels: *The Man of Feeling*, 1771; *The Man of the World*, 1773; *Julia de Roubigné*, 1777; edited two periodicals: *The Mirror* and *The Lounger*, 1779–87; wrote for the theatre; interested himself in German literature at a time when it was unknown in Scotland; held a high financial post, and died at the advanced age of eighty-six (1831). *Works*, 8 vols., 1807–8. See H. Schwarz, *Henry Mackenzie*, 1911; *The Anecdotes and Egotisms of Henry Mackenzie*, ed. by H. W. Thompson, 1928.

nature has [illegible] gling and [illegible] definitely s[illegible] sensibility.

In other respects, it is to Richardson that Mackenzie owes most, although he never ceases to be the ardent admirer of [illegible]

the least real originality. His sentimentalism is rather shal- [illegible]

of its own impulses.

[illegible] him, we [illegible] ing [illegible] has [illegible] l as [illegible] free [illegible]

indistinguishable feeling, is brought to such a degree, as to render not only possible but logical all the moral complexities, all the paradoxical perversions of the emotions, in which Romanticism will like to indulge.

The Castle of Otranto, by Horace Walpole,[1] is the clever achievement of an inquiring mind, which had enough intuition to divine a widespread need of the public, but not enough genius—or might one say sincerity?—to create a viable illusion.

It is very difficult to-day to welcome the suggestion which this novel seeks to work out in a way as emphatic as it is broad. The success it enjoyed in its day goes to prove how ready lay a still untouched vein of feeling, and how willing the contemporary imagination was to meet the writer half-way.

[1] 1764; ed. C. Spurgeon, 1923; see above, Book III, Chap. VII, sect. v.

is coloured with a sentimentality more purely middle-clas
divests itself of the aristocratic and slightly free character

emotion itself assumes a more distinctly psycholo
character. As a work of art, *The Old English Baro*
decidedly mediocre; but it has this advantage over *The C*
of Otranto, that it effectively prepares the literary publi
the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, as well as for a type of femi
Romanticism which, since that date, has remained a dist

of original gifts, whose name to-day, however, is as goo
forgotten.[1]

superior talent might have proved just and fertile, but wh

[1] An intermediary writer between Clara Reeve and Mrs Radcliffe wo
Charlotte Smith (*Emmeline, or the Orphan of the Castle*, 1788, *Ethelinde*,

imperfectly realized, only leads to disastrous results. Her reason and her conscience refuse to admit, save in one posthumous novel, the existence of the supernatural properly so called; and although in many of her pages she does create an impression of dread and mystery, she eventually reduces it, through a full explanation, to nothing more than an illusion.

This method is traceable perhaps, in some measure, to the general atmosphere of the closing years of the century, when people were yielding more and more to the influence of tender illusions, without actually abandoning the standards of reason. Yet the chief source is really to be found in a religious aversion towards any spell in which the influence of evil might lurk. Mrs. Radcliffe is a strict Protestant, who looks askance at what she deems to be part of Roman Catholic or popular superstition, even although she cannot resist its fascinating appeal.

To explain away the supernatural is an unpardonable error, if the feeling of dread which the artist wishes to evoke demands a belief in the supernatural. When once the reader has been undeceived, that is to say, enlightened, it is a more difficult and even impossible task to create again in the course of a novel, or series of novels, the atmosphere of illusion. And this is a danger which Mrs. Radcliffe fails to elude. With infinite trouble she labours to piece together the threads of dark intrigues, utilizing the resources of underground passages, secret doors, rusty daggers, and ethereal music; but to us of to-day all these material factors, with their laborious fragility, are something more than merely unconvincing; they are a source of annoyance, and have a deadening effect upon the whole work.

But at the same time she had a vague intuitive sense of an art whose subtle spell is potent only when life, in all its actuality, merges into the uncertain region of disquieting possibilities. Besides their artificial plots, her novels have an atmosphere, in which her gift for intense and delicate suggestion finds ample scope. As each story unfolds itself, there is the constant feeling that not only the scenic descriptions, but the general happenings, together with the indefinable sense of apprehension which the writer can so skilfully impart, all combine to suggest that our convictions are not rigidly limited by material existence, and that what has seemed hitherto to be definite is now a flowing, floating symbol of uncertainty. Such a feeling—which is really a great innovation in English literature — does not necessarily imply belief in the super-

natural. The familiar aspect of things in general has now
ise of impending
the reader; and
f Mrs. Radcliffe,
which was the secret of her great success among her contemporaries. Even to-day its fascination has not entirely lost its magic power.

ing nature of the
spirituality in the
ll—it is a product
enter, one might
say, all the elements of Romanticism. It possesses a quality

existence with the highest emotions will not be found to owe much to the example set by Mrs. Radcliffe; but it will in the main generalize her principles, give them greater preciseness, and eke them out by a whole philosophy.

scribes—Central France, the Pyrenees, the Apennines, Venice, Southern Italy—but she gleans her inspiration from travel notes, re-creates, transposes, or invents at will, with all the

not be more passionate; and from the mountain heights, or the forests, in which she places the novel which perhaps offer the most pleasant reading, because it was penned when discretion was still one of her gifts, there radiate a lasting

freshness and sublimity over her imaginings, which in othe respects have felt the power of time.

As a portrayer of character, Mrs. Radcliffe is weak in th art of infusing life into her personages, composed for the mos part of innocent, sensitive young girls who are persecuted, c aged servants, ruined noblemen, traitors, and bandits. The are soon forgotten, with the exception of the Schedoni of *Th Italian*, who stands out in bold relief. This character with on or two others has furnished Romanticism, as has been rightl pointed out, with the dominant traits of a general type c physiognomy that will scarcely be found to vary; one of it notable products is the Byronic hero. In this way it will b seen that Mrs. Radcliffe had an immediate influence upon th forces at work in the literature of the next generation. He novels were widely read, and left an impression on many c the minds of her time. But the most fruitful result of he work is probably that by transforming the common idea c terror into something higher and nobler, by making it mor acceptable to the feelings as well as to the moral scruple of all, she prepared the way for the teaching of Wordsworth when he showed how a lesson could be reaped from a wonde that was all a mystic illusion.

4. *Lewis*.—The influence of Lewis,[1] whose talent is decidedl more sensational, appeared to be greater than Mrs. Radcliffe in the eyes of their contemporaries; it is more on the surfac and therefore easy to estimate.

The Monk represents the work of a very young man: a fac obvious from the crude nature of the emotions he seeks t rouse, as well as from the *naïveté* of the artistic means h employs. Without the slightest restraint he proceeds t exploit the thrill of conscious and pleasing terror, compoundin it with others of a kindred nature, such as that prompted b sensual desire or by the loathsome sight of some physic horror. So that the psychological development begun b

[1] Matthew Gregory Lewis, born in London, 1775, was the son of a high placed official; studied at Oxford; travelled in Germany, where he was deep influenced by the spirit of Romantic wonder. In his twentieth year, he wro his first novel, *Ambrosio, or the Monk* (1795); owing to the scandal it created public opinion, he was forced to revise it before it appeared in a second editio He exploited the same vein in other stories: *Tales of Terror*, 1799; *Tales Wonder*, 1801; *Romantic Tales*, 1808. His theatrical works include *The Cas Spectre*, 1797; *The East Indian*, 1799; *Alphonso*, 1801, etc. *The Bravo Venice* was a translation from the German, 1805. He met Scott, Southe Shelley, Byron; and died in 1818, leaving in manuscript the *Journal of a W India Proprietor*, 1834. *The Monk*, ed. Baker, 1907. See *Life and Corr spondence*, 1839.

Walpole, but of which the seeds are really to be found in the work of Richardson, here reaches its final stage of sheer unrelieved morbidity. The novel of Lewis enjoyed a success due to its fascinating power of striking a terror with which a secret feeling of repulsion was not unmixed; but very soon public taste turned away from so open a revelation of affinities about which consciousness [illegible]
Yet the Satanism of [illegible]
stimulus which imagin[illegible]
were derived some of [illegible]
aspect of Romanticism; and thus its influence can be regarded in the light of a liberation.

With Lewis we leave behind the mood of middle-class sentimentalism, and come back to an artificial literature in the manner of Walpole. *The Monk* is destitute of all moral depth; its atmosphere is heavy and unreal; the characterization is over-simplified, like that of melodrama. Where Mrs. Radcliffe could often instil so subtle an effect into her suggestions of the supernatural, Lewis handles his subject-matter directly and roughly. The juvenile ardour which lies at the core of his work, and which, unaware of its own secret nature, so clumsily conceals itself in the guise of a superficial didactic intent, no longer provokes any sympathetic response in us. But if the book is hopelessly lacking in warmth, it still preserves some strength in the intensity of vision which the author devotes to the portrait of his hero *The Monk* forced itself, as it were, upon its generation. Even Mrs Radcliffe may have been indebted to it for the conception of her Schedoni; and the imitations of German ballads, written in [illegible]

[illegible]

Modern Language Association of America, June 1927); A. M Killen, *Le* [illegible]

[illegible]

[1] The vogue of the 'novel of terror' continued after Lewis; see below, p. 1020.

CHAPTER IV

RATIONALISM

1. *The Persistence of Certain Rational Elements.*—A special study of philosophical thought during the last thirty years or so of the eighteenth century shows that thinkers, generally, have been content to maintain the traditions handed down from the preceding age.

It will be remembered also that these traditions were of an already complicated nature, and it is not to be wondered at if, while keeping their dominant characteristics, they tend more and more to change under the effect of the moral and social evolution in progress. The influence of a diffuse sentimentalism is now beginning to colour and penetrate the doctrines of the rationalists. There is no doubt that the psychological and philosophical views of Hartley, Priestley, and Price are, on the whole, subservient to rational standards of thinking, which often lead to very daring conclusions; on the other hand, however, the Scotsmen, Reid and Dugald Stewart, represent quite a different type of thinker, and claim intuition and experience as their guides. In the same way, while theology, ethics, aesthetics, political economy, history itself, whether older or newer branches of knowledge, are instinct with an unreserved confidence in the power of reason, and while the moral sciences are being founded or developed on the basis of similar principles and methods with those of the natural sciences, still the theorists, by continually referring either to the concrete, or to feeling, or by subjecting reason to the requirements of actual fact or practical issues, do not allow it to be forgotten that a transformation has begun in the national thought, which leads it back to the fuller cognizance of its own originality. Without denying the great part played by intellectualism—utilitarianism itself will prove to be a philosophy of the intellect—the English genius, at the same time as Romanticism is liberating its innermost and truest artistic instinct, more and more exactly realizes itself in an attitude of mind at once empirical and idealistic.

The paradox of the whole Romantic age is that the signs of that realization should remain of rather secondary importance.

There is thus evidence of a certain discord between abstra
theories on the one hand, and those latent, concrete doctri
which are called literature and moral life on the other. Th
estrangement, more apparent than real, can be explained; a
indeed it tends to disappear in the light of those simp
affinities which always exist in individual cases between a
and thought.

The great utilitarian movement, which provides, as it wer
so singular a background of clear and calculating intellectu
ism to the fervour of the English Romanticists, is connect
with the social evolution; it voices certain of the strong desi
of the middle classes. But these desires are neither those
the heart nor those of the conscience; they represent a de
sense of interest, the spirit which aims at material realizatio
the taste for economic independence, all of which find stro
encouragement in the spheres of industry and commerce; a
these tendencies answer to one main aspect of the Engli
bourgeoisie, to features which are already in evidence, but a
intensified by the industrial revolution. Thus the psych
logical temperament of this class is being modified; and bo
literature and thought, which for the last hundred years h
been especially its debtors for all that suggested practic
sense, sentiment or morality, will now in turn, and as forcibl
receive from it suggestions of a dry egoistic individualis
But while these suggestions may often appear to play a dom
nant part, it will never be an absolutely exclusive one; n
will they destroy the effect, with the general mass of t
nation, of an essential psychological duality; for with t
middle years of the nineteenth century will come a revo
when all that is instinctively opposed to them will open
defy their excessive authority.

2. *Philosophers, Theologians, and Moralists.*—The des
for a rational explanation of the problems of mind produc
some rather remarkable results in the work of Hartle
Priestley, and Price.[1]

[1] David Hartley (1705–57): studied for the Church, later became a medi
practitioner; *Observations on Man*, 1749. See Bower, *Hartley and James M*
1881. Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), son of an artisan, was a Presbyteri
minister, then joined the Unitarians; for his radical opinions he was mad
French citizen and a member of the Convention; in 1794 he emigrated
America, where he died. His discoveries in chemistry alone would suffice
make him famous. Besides numerous religious treatises, his writings inclu
an *Essay on the First Principles of Government*, 1768; a *Disquisition relating*
Matter and Spirit, 1777; and a reply to the *Reflections* of Burke on the Fren
Revolution. He also left autobiographical memoirs. *Works*, ed. Ru

These writers have certain traits in common; although t ideas can be said to resemble one another only in a very gen way; they show a kind of hard vigour in their earnest pur of truth, proceeding from a great strength of character, allied to a sense of reality which often tends to limit in an a trary manner the range of their conceptions. If Hartley not create the theory of the association of ideas, he certai developed it, and in this way prepared the main theme utilitarian psychology in the nineteenth century. At the sa time, he opens the way to the psycho-physiological theo of consciousness, in that he traces the various facultie perception and memory, and indeed every kind of me activity, to what he terms the 'vibrations' of the nerve cent Thus the progress of his ideas leads him towards a panthei materialism; but he reacts against it, upholds the authorit Divine revelation, and works out a new theology. Priest on the other hand, is more rational on this point and p aside the idea of belief in a soul, seeking rather to establish correlation of mind and body: but while he adopts the the of association, he rejects that of the nervous vibrations; his social opinions, strongly based on the experimental i of an interest that is common to society as a whole, and c stitutes its exclusive end, anticipate the political empiric of Bentham. Price, full of zeal for the rights of the citi and the apostle of American Independence as of the Fre Revolution, is essentially the type of the British 'intellectu but he attacks the teaching of Locke and Hume by endov the reason with the power of forming new ideas, and fir maintains that the qualities of good and evil are intuiti perceptions of the understanding.

These authors are not writers in the strict interpretatio the term; their most original thoughts were accessible onl the initiated; so that the general public was concerned with their political or religious doctrines. The Scottish sc of philosophers owed its relative popularity to the fact its tendencies harmonized with the sentiments of the mas Throughout the whole of this age, the penetrating sceptic of Hume is a constant menace to any affirmation put forw on behalf of the moral conscience, with the result that

1831–2. See Thorpe, *Priestley*, 1906. Richard Price, 1723–91, a Unita minister, published *A Review of the Principal Questions in Morals*, 1757; up the cause of the American colonies and of the French Revolution. Se Thomas, *Richard Price, etc.*, 1924.

effusion of the human soul, a kind of friendly benevolen
free from any ulterior motive. Yet the exercise of such

principle. He denies the existence of a particular and my
terious 'sense,' which Shaftesbury and Hutcheson claimed
exist; sympathy, according to him, is the motive force of

requi
onger
ence.
a fact
one a

other. The economic laws governing such relations were la
to become the study of Adam Smith, who in this new sphe
of thought tended rather to stress the importance of what
deemed to be a necessary egoism.

3. *Aesthetics and Criticism.*—The mind of the eighteen
century, attracted by the idea of general laws, and no long
differentiating between spiritual matters and physical natu
tries to reduce art not only to a system of rules but to wh
it believes are explanatory formulae. After the effort
classicism, which evolved categories and precepts for beau
and taste, there opens a period of still greater ambitio
when the science of aesthetics appears, and literary criticis
becomes a philosophy.

This movement in thought is connected with the quarrel

1750 by the renascence of the national spirit to uphold t

poses is orthodox and traditional allow themselves to
influenced as far as seeking to destroy the basic princip
of orthodoxy. One of the most remarkable aspects of t
trend of ideas during the century is this critical liberty whi
defines and suggests beforehand all the bold departures
the Romantic spirit, just as the progress of sentiment a
imagination brings out all the mental elements of Romanticis

[1] See below, sect. 3. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1759.

while the literature, as if bewitched, remains passively submissive to established forms of verbal expression, and lacks the courage to develop its own freedom. The theory of beauty in art, as in literature, frees itself from the dogma of classicism long before the actual appearance of the works in which this independence is definitely illustrated.

As early as 1753, the painter Hogarth[1] champions the cause of the sinuous line as against the straight, denies that any good can come from pure imitation in art, and thus instils a new life into the classical principle of fidelity to nature, by extending its scope to that of an original endeavour. Joseph Warton's *Essay on Pope* and Young's *Conjectures*[2] in their turn define the qualities of creative genius, uphold the rights of individuality, and place it above the mere observance of rules.

The *Inquiry* of Burke[3] at the same time voices the need for analysis, gives vent to the urgent desire among intellectuals for a well-defined systematization in aesthetic matters, and illustrates the dominant tendencies which are directing thought, quite unconsciously, towards the theory of liberty in art. Burke protests against the old-time custom of looking or the rules of the beautiful in works that have realized it; ature alone is the source from which fresh beauty can spring. loreover, when he closely connects the sublime with terror, nd shows the influence of the unseen and the mysterious in e production of fear, he outlines, as it were, beforehand the nge and scope of the novel of terror. He dimly foresees at emotion can be explained by a physiological theory; and light he throws upon the relation of the human organism the impression of beauty explains and justifies the role t Romanticism will soon give to the strong stimulation of senses, and to suggestion as a general force in art. He self indicates very precisely the way in which poetry ences the sensibility of a reader; it is a contagious action, ich the value of words is measured by their own tonality, y the emotional energy which they have received from npassioned soul of the poet. The suggestive force of lies in their power of radiating an appeal to the senses imagination, and not in their quality of mere intel-

Analysis of Beauty, written with a View of fixing the Fluctuating Taste.

and 1759; see above, Book IV, Chap. I, sect. 4.

ilosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and , 1756.

lectual symbols. It is on this very principle that Wordsworth

that rules are derived from the inner laws governing human nature. He also directs aesthetic thought in England, right

to the work of *Blair*,[2] whose *Lectures* form the taste of a whole generation. This critic has still a little of the narrow-mindedness of his time, as can be seen from his somewhat formal ideas on rhetoric and on a correct style; but his pages reveal a secret sympathy with the sentimental moralizing atmosphere around him; a dim sense of intuition seems to

secondary
tion and fe
conciseness,
but finds its full expression in the liberty of blank verse. It has its being in the thought, not in the words, so that every writer who attempts to reach the sublime by mere intensity of expression is in error. Prosody is not necessary to the

rigour of a severe classicism. It affirms the existence of a

is the first care of the artist, then his active mind will bu up from actual forms an abstract idea of the ideal in beau and this, in turn, will guide him in his search after the sublin Compared with this great art, the realism of Hogarth, Tenier Watteau, and Claude le Lorrain is on an inferior level. Th value of a work is measured by the corresponding worth o the mental energy which has gone to produce it, or which i has called into play. A painter of noble ambition shall seel his subjects in history or in fable; he shall choose them fo their human and universal interest. He shall always be an imitator; genius itself is the offspring of imitation. Drawing is the language proper to painting; the colour must remain before all simple and sober; it shall be subservient to the idea. The truthfulness shown in local or particular delineation shall be sacrificed in favour of the general element, of that unchanging, everlasting quality which belongs exclusively to reason. It is therefore evident that the doctrine of Reynolds is, and chiefly aims at being, classical. At the same time, in practice his brush reveals an indebtedness to the colourists of the Venetian school, and the happy originality of his artistic temperament.

4. *Political Economy · Adam Smith.*—The beginnings[1] of political economy in England can be traced farther back than the works of Adam Smith. At the same time it must not be forgotten that he was in touch with the French school of physiocrats, who contributed in moulding his thought. But even after the lapse of a century and a half, he is still, by the most solid of claims, the first master of this science, which in its modern and liberal form has exercised an acknowledged influence over minds and actions alike.[2]

With Adam Smith economy already represents a developed system; he makes a comprehensive survey of a vast field, marking it out into separate parts, and laying down the great

[1] In the works of Hobbes, Locke, Mandeville, Joshua Child, Sir William Petty, Hume, and Sir James Stewart.

[2] Adam Smith, born at Kirkcaldy in 1723, of middle-class family; studied at Oxford; renounced a church career for that of literature; professor of logic, then of moral philosophy, in the university of Glasgow, he published his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, 1759; travelled on the Continent, and in Paris came into contact with Quesnay, Turgot, and Necker. He wrote, in studious seclusion, his *Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776; was given a lucrative post in Edinburgh, and died in 1790, leaving in manuscript form his *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, 1795. *Wealth of Nations*, ed. MacCulloch, 1828; ed. Cannan, 1904. See John Rae, *Life of Adam Smith*, 1895; Hirst, *Adam Smith* (English Men of Letters), 1904; Haldane, *Adam Smith* (Great Writers), 1887.

of research which so many others have followed in his . His thought has an inner coherence, which enables to organize with vigour all the vast store of ideas at his nand. But his doctrine has not as yet acquired the ex-vely deductive, inflexible, and almost geometrical form h certain of his disciples will later give it. A gifted er in the realms of abstract thought, he never loses touch, ever, with reality, and if at times he fails to appreciate all spects of certain facts, his powers of perception are none less subtle and delicately tempered. His intellectual con is that of a very careful observer, who not only is able

ithout analysing too carefully the inherent prejudices of new *bourgeoisie*, Adam Smith finds himself agreeing with various needs and preferences; indeed, to such an extent he becomes the apostle of their individualism. But, ough he may be said to voice in his work the instincts of ass, he nevertheless preserves the relative freedom of a d mind, as well as a nobility of character. The agri-ural type of country gentleman attracts him to the same ee as the class whose sole concern is commerce and in-ry; in the latter he discovers a trend, in some respects, sed to national interests. He demonstrates the fruit-ess of egoism, but in a way that evidences a cordiality of t, a gentleness of feeling, and an optimistic sensibility, h recall the temper so characteristic of the closing years he eighteenth century. Upon the subjects of social evil poverty he touches all too briefly, and in a way that est more an intellectual notion than a concrete sense. larly, he accepts too easily the inevitable working of omic laws, and these are the only points where is yet aled a tendency to hard dogmatic assertion, which will the new science of part of its truth, as well as limit the an possibilities of its influence.

ne substance of the work is concrete, made up of shrewd exact analyses. Notions and formulae which answer to cal cases, and whose scope is only absolute in theory,

ur; and the division of labour multiplies its productive

force; the various classes — landowners, capitalists, manual workers—harmonize their activities in the productive cycle, and severally receive the rewards accruing to each from the pursuit of their interests in a spirit of enlightened selfishness; the welfare of the community springs harmoniously, providentially one might say, from the egoism of the individual. Now the progress of wealth in society at large means a change from an agricultural age to a commercial era; and this, in turn, introduces the legitimate demand for a complete independence. The State, deriving its powers from the delegation of individuals, and finding in taxes the sanction of its rights, is no longer performing its duties when once it claims to direct or even supervise the natural interplay of the forces and desires in conflict. The prosperity of Europe is bound up with an economic emancipation which will destroy all that remains of a tyrannical system of rules, or all that might threaten to renew it. The orthodox teaching of Ricardo on the one hand, the socialism of Marx on the other, are latent within that doctrine, uniting as it does with its optimism what might be termed the fatalism of liberty.

Adam Smith is a cultivated writer, attentive to form, and animated by an artistic sense of order and elegance. However dull or dry the subject may be, he has been able to make it both living and perspicuous, because he is possessed of a clearness of mental vision, and can infuse a quickening force into all he touches. The tenor of his style is made of ample though not excessively long sentences, connecting the qualifications and illustrations directly with the main idea. The general flow of his prose is simple, natural, and easy.[1]

5. *The Historians: Gibbon.*—While history, as a distinct literary kind, began in England only during the eighteenth century, its progress, once started, was very rapid. The same generation which witnessed the efforts of Hume and Robertson ow sees them continued and surpassed by Gibbon.[2]

[1] Arthur Young (1741–1820), the author of numerous treatises on English riculture, is chiefly known for his works on economy, and the accounts of s travels and researches: *Political Arithmetic*, 1774; *Tour in Ireland*, 1780; *avels in France*, 1792.

[2] Edward Gibbon, born in 1737, came of an upper middle-class family; he s for some time at Oxford, but owed his precocious erudition to a zealous e of study. In 1753 he was converted to Roman Catholicism, but returned Protestantism under the influence of a Swiss pastor with whom he resided Lausanne. From 1758 to 1762 he was engaged in military duties; in 1761 ublished in French his *Essai sur l'étude de la littérature*. Three years later, e on a visit to Rome, he conceived the idea of relating the fall of the Roman ire, a work at which he laboured when settled in London and during the

ork has better stood the test of time. It represents
nsity of labour and an erudition that are admirable, a
ense of values sane and naturally delicate. Gibbon
er after truth, a writer who never forgets the complex
f his quest, who is careful over the precise shade of
he wishes to convey, and whose every affirmation is
with prudence. He has exhausted every source of
ion then known, whether ancient or modern. And
broader and deeper science has since renovated the
of his pages, transforming many of his perspectives
recting occasional errors, yet the main lines of his
are still acceptable; and the spirit of conscientiousness

rganization of his materials he shows the boldness
ster mind, building up an edifice of prose, the archi-
idea of which is the cult of the beautiful. Exactitude
ectivity are thus combined with art in a thousand
d of necessity suffer from the compromise; but on the
nd they are raised to a superior plane of consistency,
hey owe to the unity of one presiding thought and

n's thought is philosophical, and his vision is that of
but the great effort of his intellectual power is con-
d in the desire to understand. He instinctively looks
evelopments and changes of things. He can appre-
value of institutions, of public life, of customs and
ven if he fails to recognize the full importance of these
ements. The decline and the fall of ancient Rome

Parliamentary career. The first volume of the *Decline and Fall of*
Empire appeared in 1776, and was received very favourably, but

are bound up with political happenings, which,
inseparable from moral causes. And it is such
Gibbon sets out to unravel, with a penetrating di
which suggests the method and example of Mont
other respects also he is much indebted to Fr
learning of a Tillemont, as to the elegant luc
French political writers.

Viewing thus at one glance the history of the
tion which saw the development of Europe from
order to the birth of a new civilization, his judgm
only a natural series of connected facts. His p
is that of the modern scientist. During the
witness the decadence of Rome, Christianity in
progress is a moral and political growth that sp
the paths of decay; so that between a decadent
one hand and the new cult on the other, the
obscure and intricate relationship, as to which
the Church have built up a positive doctrine. G
ever, sees that interrelation in quite a different li
while he thinks with complete freedom, he does
he can speak freely, he adopts towards the orth
an attitude of cold deference and discreet irony,
in a rather ineffective way to mask his aggressive
The organic connections which make the most opp
of the evolution of mankind mutually dependen
preted by a kind of positive realism; the mystica
of souls appears as another side of the general
of intelligence; while the formation of the ecclesi
is hailed not only as an effect, but also as a cause
of the social order.

With an intrepid brush Gibbon sets out to
accepted lights and shades in the traditional pict
early centuries; the prestige of a benign and
humanity sheds a soft glow over the heathen worl
to its fall; the victory of Christianity, strong by
intrinsic virtues and stronger still through its fan
is hardly distinguishable from that of barbarism
claiming the intervention of supernatural cause
of to-day attribute a very different part to t
stimulus which the cult of Christianity brought wit
terizing it rather as a deep quickening of the con

In these chapters which reflect the mental outlook of a Voltaire, Gibbon's art deals often in the sober tints of implied meaning. Yet, despite such reticence and the method of insinuation, his work as a whole possesses a genuine vigour, moving forward with a clear and ample sweep, so broad and powerful that it has been compared with the movement of some great epic. Flashes of the Romantic sense of historical origins at times enliven an evocation of the past which is [illegible]

The style of Gibbon has acquired a well-deserved fame. More simple than that of Johnson, it is still not free from obvious elaboration, and from some oratorical solemnity. There is also a slightly artificial elegance, a too frequent use of antithesis, and a touch of rhetoric, which mark the language as that of the eighteenth century. But on the other hand, the verbal texture of the whole presents a perfect solidity, and is marred in no way by the polish which it has received. The plan of the work shows Gibbon to be a writer of the greatest constructive genius, and one of the sanest of logicians. At the same time he is a narrator, uniting the gifts of th[illegible] such var[illegible] reading, [illegible] page. Lastly, strong creative imagination bathes this monumental fresco in a light that is somewhat cold, but tranquil, and full of suggestion to the mental sight of the reader.

[illegible] 1906

CHAPTER V

THE CLASSICAL TEMPERAMENTS

1. *The Later Classicists and Independent Writers.*—If the historic age of classicism does come to an end, classicism itself never dies. As it represents in the life of literature one of the fundamental phases, associated with one of the essential aspects of artistic creation, it can disappear only to reappear, and never is entirely effaced. With many it preserves a dim and hidden existence; while it remains in its fullness as a clear and well-defined factor with some exceptional temperaments, which carry the spirit of one literary period into the next, thus both harking back to the past and giving a premonition of the future. Even in the heyday of Romanticism writers will be found who, belated in a way, will be precursors just as well.

From 1770 to 1800, however, it is fairly obvious that a certain phase in English literature is about to end. The artistic codes which for well-nigh a century have held the field are now becoming more and more inadequate; at the same time life itself is responsible for the creation of other codes, which are tentative to a great extent, but about whose vitality there can be no room for doubt. This contrast is to be seen especially in the verse of the period.

The poets of note during these thirty years form, as it were, two natural groups. The first consists of those who, more influenced by the new spirit, are already giving it a pronounced expression; certain even succeed in effecting to a large extent the necessary renovation of form; in the case of Blake, the outstanding poet of this first group, there is little to distinguish him from the Romantic generation who were to be his contemporaries for the latter part of his life. The second group are more strictly obedient to the traditional modes of inspiration and style; not that they are against any desire for change, or do not experience the need for innovation in poetry; but their very efforts are guided by the stereotyped codes which they have never dared to challenge, so that even when the vague tremors of a new-felt inspiration stir their souls, their poetry remains fettered to mechanical processes

and passive adherence to custom. They show much
promise of the future than the signs of a décadence;
the last of the direct line of classical poets.

Lastly, the literary transition of the century is rep
as well, whether in prose or in poetry, by some more
personalities, with whom the dominance of classicism
merely passive survival, but answers to the deliberat
of a temperament. Here indeed one plainly discerns t

against the new spirit and follow the truth of their
To the growing cult of the emotions, the bold flig
released imagination, to the turbid, ambiguous, self-in
and perhaps even insincere element in the fervid e
of souls, they respond by a mood of uneasy hostility
keep, as it were, immune when all the literary atn
around them is charged with the contagious upse
fluence of the new ideas; they remain the supreme m
themselves; and they react in the spirit of a maliciou
and a realism that is either refined or bitter. The

and faded in its turn.

2. *The Poets.*—A difficulty presents itself when poet
to be considered, in regard to the classification of the
moods that animate it. It cannot subsist on pure rea
will at least tinge its intellectual themes with emotion
fore the oppositions between the general moods of wr
most often less clear-cut in poetry than in prose. Th
years of the eighteenth century offer a case in poi
mingling, in unequal proportions, of the new sentim
and of all the abstract ideas handed down from th
reason, tends to lessen the gap that separates the poe
two groups, and at times would seem even to uni

terizes the writers of this group. When, as in the work of 'Peter Pindar,'[1] there is an attempt to revive satire, it is no less prosaic than it is vulgarly forcible. With him a spirit of mockery excludes any attempt at sentiment, while a reminiscence of the orthodox ode results in a laboured variety of rhythms; but the result has all the barrenness of a degenerate classicism, and nothing that would suggest the inspiring force of the true classical spirit.[2] In Robert Bloomfield's work,[3] a racy strength, a temperament that savours of the people, is warped and weakened through the medium of an acquired style, a studied elegance, a commonplace regularity. Even Campbell,[4] whose mature years coincide with all the great period of Romanticism, bears for life the imprint of the un- [illegible]

[illegible] with their rousing intensity of appeal, some interesting attempts, and here and there the scattered accents of un- [illegible]

[illegible] their work, if judged by its essential features, shows the stamp of the years preceding this age. To the characteristic traits of [illegible]

[1] John Wolcot (1738–1819), whose pseudonym was 'Peter Pindar,' wrote numerous parodies and satires on his contemporaries.

[2] [illegible]

[illegible] 1801, etc.

[4] Thomas Campbell (1774–1844): *The Pleasures of Hope*, 1799; *Gertrude of Wyoming*, 1809, etc.; *Poetical Works*, ed. Robertson, 1907. See the study by Hadden (Famous Scots Series), 1899.

forms which make them much rather the heirs of the classical tradition in its essence; and their temperaments, to the very end, bear the deep mark of that early choice. Their mental outlook remains that of the close of the eighteenth century.

Of the three, Miss Burney [1] is the least remote from the first flush of sentimentalism in England; she remains more than half a sentimentalist herself. Richardson she hails as a master; in *Evelina* she takes from him the idea of a novel in letters, a tone of conscious moralizing, the study of virtue among women as a subject for a plot—a study which remains with her discreet and unobtrusive; and the setting up of a strong contrast between the good and the wicked. From the atmosphere of her own day she acquires the habit of the ever-ready tear, and the lavish display of feeling. But if such traits tend to stamp her as one of a school of writers, she has others which single out her talent as one of the most original. The spontaneous vivacity of her verve, the fresh new touch she brings to all her observation of customs and manners, and behind her brilliant gift that clear judgment, readily ironical, of a young person in full control of herself, all make her an exponent of satire and realism, in which her innermost nature seems to have dwelt and had its being.

Fashionable society has always delighted in its own reflected image; but never before had it seen itself through the eyes of a young girl of so arch a temperament and so shrewd a nature, who could penetrate from the feminine point of view the weak points of drawing-room life, and in the most delightful manner completely reverse the picture of it painted by writers of the opposite sex; yet who was able at the same time to flatter the taste of her readers by showing a sincere respect for rank and worldly conventions. There is, to use a phrase not yet then in vogue, a certain snobbery in her work; but it is a quality which enables her more readily to seize in its very essence the superficial, brilliant, and frivolous life she

[1] Frances (or more familiarly, Fanny), the second daughter of Doctor Burney, a musician of note, was born in 1753 and introduced at an early age into the fashionable society of London. Her novel, written in secret, *Evelina, or a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*, 1778, had a great success; she acknowledged the authorship and in 1782 published *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*. Attached to the court as one of the queen's maids of honour from 1786 to 1791, she married in 1793 General d'Arblay, a French emigrant, and resided in Paris from 1802 to 1812. After the publication of her last two novels—*Camilla*, 1796; *The Wanderer*, 1814—she wrote a life of her father (1832), and died in 1840. Her *Diary and Letters* were published by her niece (1842–6), ed. by Dobson, 1904–5; *Evelina*, ed. Sir F. D. MacKinnon, 1930. See Dobson, *Fanny Burney*, 1903; M. Masefield, *The Story of Fanny Burney*, 1927.

describes; and her description is pleasing, because she has the gift of a witty and animated style. She often shows up the little whims of people with no excess of indulgence; and in some of the figures she has drawn with a rather too pronounced touch of comedy we are reminded of Smollett. In other cases, we think of Fielding, or even of Sterne. The author of *Evelina* had a precocious and assimilative talent. But Miss [illegible] with her marriage, been described so successfully. Here is a picture of the aristocracy of the time with its sense of refinement in contrast to its relative lack of delicacy; it must be [illegible] in the novel, if we leave aside the bold freedom of a Mrs. Behn or a Mrs. Manley, does not conceal that inner ardour of imagination which will often develop in a life whose interests are all bound up in love.

And still, what predominates is common sense, coloured to some extent by the spirit of dry calculation. The term 'Romantic' is hardly ever used except ironically. The pictures of happiness held out are such as a social world will allow in which wealth, birth, and health are yet the almost indispensable conditions of any success. The second novel of Miss Burney, *Cecilia*, with greater care in the writing, has less of the fresh liveliness of the first; it is yet more closely obedient to the fashions in vogue, whether literary or intellectual. The *Memoirs* of Madame d'Arblay shows us a woman of sufficient talent and feeling to take in the various interests and picturesque aspects of the social life which surrounds her, and whose image she has preserved; but entirely unable to rise above them.

Those traits reappear in the work of Jane Austen [1] but

[1] Jane, youngest child of George Austen, a country parson, was born in Hampshire (1775), received a careful education, and led an uneventful, home-keeping life amid the quiet provincial surroundings of the south. She began to write at an early age, and three of her novels were already completed before the end of the century, but they did not appear in print until a later date.

further developed and chiefly much refined. By virtue of a stronger personality and a keener sense of delicacy in art, she is a writer of the first rank.

Miss Burney had connected the whole fate of her characters with the central crisis in the life of woman, when the possibility of marriage lies directly in her path, and thus had created what may be termed the domestic novel.[1] In the hands of Jane Austen the subject is thoroughly sifted, and more strictly reduced to essentials; all the worldliness over which the authoress of *Evelina* loves to linger is unknown to her or is omitted, because the circle of her experience is more narrow, or indeed purely intimate. Her novels rarely treat of anything save the restricted circle of home life, and all social interests are gathered round it. The atmosphere is one of provincial calm with a very limited outlook, where the extremes of wealth and poverty are unknown. In this little world of country gentry, clergymen, and middle-class people, social intercourse is smooth and simple; few are the incidents which could be called dramatic; so that an observer's attention may concentrate on shades of character. The realism of Jane Austen is more truly psychological than that of Richardson, for it is free from the tragic obsessions of moral conscience. With its greater freedom, it acquires a greater purity. There is an extraordinary degree of truth in the picture it paints of reality —of a group of human beings, their relations one with another, their clashes and affinities, their mutual influences, their conversations.

And this gift is explained by the immediate intuition she brings to her study of character, an intuition so natural and supple that it appears absolutely simple. Her clear-sighted eyes read through the inner minds of those who live around her, or of the beings whom she invents and animates, just as if those minds were transparent. She seizes them in their

---

Sense and Sensibility appeared in 1811, *Pride and Prejudice* in 1813, *Mansfield Park* in 1814, *Emma* in 1816, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* after her death in 1817. A fragment (*Love and Freindship* [sic]) was published in 1922; others in 1925 (*Lady Susan* and *Sanditon*) and 1927 (*The Watsons*). There are several cheap editions of the novels (see Everyman's Library, etc.; ed. R. W. Chapman, 1923); the *Letters* were published in 1884. See W. and R. A. Austen-Leigh, *Jane Austen, her Life and Letters*, 1913; the studies by Goldwin Smith (Great Writers), 1890; Helm, 1909; P. Fitzgerald, 1912; Cornish (English Men of Letters) 1913; Kate and Paul Rague (*Jane Austen*), 1914; Léonie Villard (*Jane Austen*), 1914; R. Brimley Johnson, 1927.

The theme had already been adumbrated in the *Pamela* of Richardson and *Amelia* of Fielding.

depths, although at first we do not get this impression, nor does she claim to give it. Only by a slight tremor in her style, whose even course is like that of some transparent stream, are we made aware of the tension, the nervous vigour, the effort put forth by her thought to comprehend and surmount the unseen obstacles that bar its progress. And everything dissolves into light. The secret complexities of self-love, the many vanities, the imperceptible quiverings of selfishness, all that a Rochefoucauld had shown up in the strong and bitter note of straightforward denunciation, and which at a later date the pessimistic novel will dissect with such profuseness and intensity of method, is here indicated or suggested so calmly and with so sober a touch that the author's personal reaction is reduced to a minimum. There [illegible] these stories with their spirit [illegible] even say their *naïveté*, if a [illegible] not hover over every page, re- [illegible] that could be unmercifully severe.

The sentimentality of Miss Burney is entirely absent. Everything shows a delicacy of touch, a sense of balance, a serene reasonableness. All Jane Austen's work is transfused with the spirit of classicism in its highest form, in its most essential quality: a safe, orderly harmony among the powers of the mind, a harmony where of necessity the intellect is paramount. So classical, so delicately shaded is that method, that we are strongly reminded of the art of the great French analysts. Jane Austen writes as one who is entirely ignorant of the growing force of Romanticism, which already has spread its power around her; or rather she holds herself aloof, meeting its fascination with ironical immunity. One of her [illegible]

it with its resources; on the other, with a deranged condition of mind and conduct, of which it is directly the cause; and [illegible]

heart has been quenched. He has no longer any hope; his sympathy with mankind has lost all its joy. Every page of his work bears the trace of a nature driven back upon itself, of feelings repressed, of thoughts ever brooding upon the merciless limitations which reality seems to be forcing upon the soul. And this vigorous concentration, in which there is both the principle of creative energy, and at the same time a trace of morbidness, is the innermost spring of his art; to it he owes the originality of his talent, and its weaknesses.

Classicism with Crabbe is a reaction, and recognizes itself as such. His passion for truth gathers new strength from a resentful contempt for dead literary illusions. He jeers at the fanciful novel and the tales of imaginary terror. Real misfortune is to him enough. He chooses to tell it with restraint. The regular, monotonous, closely woven rhythm of the heroic couplet is the appropriate setting for the mood of quiet and of simple strength which the poet feels, and which he upholds against all the enthusiasms, the studied effects, the false ornaments of an optimistic imagination. No other measure has shorter breath; it is the least pretentious as well, and on that very account the most sincere; it is prosaic, like life itself. The traditional language, the 'poetic diction' of Pope and Gray, is a ready instrument of expression; it is natural, since it is generally accepted; to adopt it, therefore, is, in Crabbe's opinion, the surest way to avoid all the vanity of verbal pretensions. Thus it is that out of his very desire for simplicity and truth Crabbe is led instinctively to favour a conventional style; the craving he feels for novelty in matter finds no correlative in the field of form. His ear has no fastidious requirement; the artist in him demands no sensuous delights. Bent upon reality, humble of spirit, he writes in a language where all the débris of classical elegance, noble terms, generalities, and abstractions, clothe the most concrete of subjects and themes.

For his poetry has an originality quite its own, and of the rarest flavour. The inspiration is new; it lights up so vividly the most familiar aspects of daily life, those which literature had least fondly dwelt upon, that it seems to reveal them for the first time. The village, the borough, their inhabitants, the stages in their fate, their labours, their temptations, their falls, and occasionally their virtues, are drawn for the first time with a minute, accurate brush. English country life at the end of the eighteenth century is thus depicted in its

entirety, as seen by an observer whose resolute pur[...] alter in no particular the image of truth, even tho[...] almost always a bitter truth.

The picture has the faithfulness, the scrupulous [...] Dutch painting; but it lacks the sensuous joy or th[...] for sheer intensity of character that can instil a kind [...] ness into the realism of the Fl[...]

[...] dreamy sugge[...] [...] itself out through the complementary [...] music, at least has an extraordinary power of e[...] Whatever he has seen, his eye retains and holds for [...] shows it to us, perfectly, dryly, in a colourless and [...] which awakes a few gleams on the surface of stagna[...] but which idealizes nothing. Moreover, in order [...] introduce into poetry a whole range of new sensat[...] images, the mind must submit to some stretching of its [...] its very vocabulary has to seek the aid of terms still un[...] untouched by literature.

The realism of his [...] art a salutary t[...] of his verse is n[...] no longer that [...] brisk, so sparklingly neat [...] rhythm rather suggests a homely conversation, a kin[...] ding, painstaking story, the very slowness of which [...] of a deliberate statement of facts, and which finds [...] resource in the 'triplets'

An art which in *The Village* is clumsy, heavy, bu[...] strong, singularly sure as to its [...] uns[...] [...] an[...] [...] *The* [...] [...] firmly stamp[...] [...], and a style in which rough, dense elements a[...] together by means of energetic, simple methods—a[...] repetition, alliteration: such is the talent of Crabbe i[...] works. In the rest of his poetry he is weak, and te[...]

and livelier animation to his plea in favour of the poor. The truth of his pen picture is harsh and incomplete, but within its own limits is unrivalled; his pathos is sombre, crushingly painful at times, but this only makes it more telling. The characteristics of his expression single him out as the last of the classical writers; but there is also in his poetry the suggestion of a virtual Romanticism that has been repressed, the play in conflict of a suffering sensibility, and of an imagination resolutely bent under the yoke of the real.[1]

To be consulted: E. A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel*, vols. v and vi, 1935; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chap. III, vol. xi, Chaps. VII, VIII, vol. xii, Chap. X; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. vi; O. Elton, *A Survey of English Literature, 1780–1830*, 1920; Huchon, *Crabbe*, 1906; Mrs. Oliphant, *Literary History of England in the End of the Eighteenth and Beginning of the Nineteenth Century*, 1882; L. Villard, *Jane Austen*, 1914.

[1] The tendency to realism in the meticulous observation of nature is clearly seen in the pages of Gilbert White (1720–93; *The Natural History of Selborne*, 1789; see study by W. Johnson, 1929); and in the description of rural life by John Langhorne (1735–79; *The Country Justice*, 1774–7).

CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND ENGLISH LITERATURE

1. *Acceptance and Rejection of the New Ideas.*—The movement of ideas which paved the way for the French Revolution of 1789 can be traced in part to English influences. On the other hand, the Fre
left their mark on
spiritual following c

Already, before the fall of the Bastille, there is evidence of a keener interest being taken throughout Europe in political and social problems, as though in anticipation of some coming decisive crisis. The outbreak of the revolution is immediately felt through the neighbouring countries. From 1789 to 1815, the drift of European literature and thought is in certain respects determined in relation to France, whose stormy fate promotes amongst governments, nations, and writers diverse reactions of sympathy, fear, and hostility.

In the domains of political theory, philosophy, and literature, England after 1730 is giving to France even more than she receives from it. But this proportion is reversed by the turmoil of the revolution. Engrossed in its own affairs or propagating its ideas throughout Europe, revolutionary and imperial France is almost entirely absorbed in active interests, leaving to its political exiles, to a Madame de Staël or a de Villers, the opportunity of gathering the germs of foreign influence which the Romantic movement will stir into life. England, on the contrary, shaken as it is by the storm of events in France, and torn at first between a feverish admira-

or violently opposes them, and through that opposition strengthens her consciousness of self. France is the pole of attraction or repulsion around which English intellectual life, in a large measure, tends to group itself during that period.

This relation to France, whether in a positive or in a negative sense, is of use in enabling us to classify individual minds, and to isolate a group of writers, not too artificially, during the first phase of the period. The oncoming of the French Revolution, its actual beginnings, and its successive stages, is,

from about 1780 to 1800, the predominant factor in the m
outlook of political theorists, polemical writers, novelists
even dramatists and poets. From about 1800, on the
trary, the moral and imaginative stir caused by the
upheaval enters into a new literature as one of its elem
and combines with the diverse impulses which give bir
English Romanticism in its definitive form. The influ
of the revolution after 1800 will be, therefore, part and p
of the study of the full-grown Romantic movement.

On the whole, in the course of the first period, the re
tionary or counter-revolutionary fever is not connected
simple way with the growth of Romanticism. It stimu
energies, calls forth individual temperaments, and gives
an added impetus in the direction which its own inst
were ready to take. Therefore this literature, from a psy
logical point of view, seems to possess very mixed ch
teristics. The partisans of the revolution are, for the
part, generous enthusiasts, guided by sensibility and sw
by imagination; but the doctrine of abstract liberty
equality appeals to reason; to passionate logicians it is
to propagate it; and its intellectual rigour causes it t
denounced by its adversaries as an inhuman and chim
kind of geometry. With the conservatives, one expec
find, and one actually does find, self-control and a cold be
in matters intellectual; they are fond of irony; and their sa
in verse are naturally cast in the classical mould. But
indignation is equally prone to find expression in ton
vehemence; and the greatest of them all, Burke, quicken
organic doctrine of traditional order through a powerful
intuitive imagination, set off by a language of fiery eloqu

Revolutionary literature reflects the conflict in the m
of men. That conflict deeply stirs the soul of the time,
hastens the germination of the new art which is prepa
But this is a silent, an underground influence. It is afte
keenest part of the struggle, in the quiet meditation
relative lull, that the lasting and fruitful effect will be
Until then, the absorbing question which engrosses tho
furnishes works of literature with their subject-matter, r
than it enters into the determination of their style; it is
yet a vital artistic influence. The great revolutionary d
appeals to the whole of human nature, and calls all its
faculties into play; it rouses souls to a pitch of enthusi
or tears them by an inner conflict; it is thus far from cre

most clear-sighted and uncompromising reason.

2. *The Revolutionaries: Politics, the Novel, and the Stage.* —The revolution, from the start, has adversaries who are opposed to it in principle, just as it can claim its supporters. Burke's indictment precedes the defensive arguments of Paine and Mackintosh. But, on the whole, the two attitudes adopted

mind, and is of a more lasting nature; so that the doctrine of Burke, brought into being as it is by momentary circumstances, has the ample scope of a national thesis, which for many years guided the trend of political thought.

The theorists of social utility who appealed to reason found *themselves united for the defence of the abstract general principles* which France had just proclaimed. A sermon by Price [1] had called forth the denunciations of Burke; Priestley [2] replied to these. Mackintosh [3] and Paine [4] championed the theme of liberty by consecrating their learning or zeal to its cause. Even to-day the treatise of Paine is not without interest. As a counter-weapon against the impassioned rhetoric of Burke, he

of popular appeal.

his contemporaries,

reasoning and critical mind, a mind almost French, with a

[1] See above, Chap. IV, sect. 2. *Discourse on the Love of our Country*, 1789.

[2] See idem. *Letters to Mr. Burke*, 1791.

[3] Sir James Mackintosh (1765–1832): *Vindiciae Gallicae*, 1791.

[4] Thomas Paine (1737–1809), a Quaker by birth, was a strong supporter of the cause of the American revolutionaries (1776–83); then warmly upheld the

to which intellectualism in its application to social and moral problems, ever went in England. During those closing years of a century of reason, under the stress of the Revolutionary storm in France, the empiricism so deeply inherent in the normal English mind is rooted out of certain thinkers; leaving their thoughts to seek an equilibrium only in the coherence of principles, which can be deduced or brought into a system. Every tie, every limitation found in feelings, habits, prejudices, necessities of fact, are thus done away with; an all-powerful logic destroys the existing order in its minutest parts, and sets up an entirely new fabric in its place.

The intellectual search for truth and justice can alone give those ideal notions a precise outline. Justice and truth will be the work of a race guided by reason, a race which a well-planned system of education would from now onwards produce. Character can be moulded with a perfect sureness of touch, and the doctrine of determinism opens out before the eyes of mankind unlimited prospects of moral progress. Freed from the trammels of all emotional influence, each mind will find its own guiding standards in logical deduction. It will no longer be swayed by the illusions of feeling, but will be led by pure intelligence, which in every instance will reveal to it the highest goal of action, the common good. Such should be the one great aim of the legislator; and a society founded upon reason will enjoy the full rights of equality and liberty. The existing distribution of wealth, the established forms of government, the traditional modes of living, even marriage itself, will be revised and remodelled according to those principles; and every constraint exercised upon the individual will be reduced to a minimum. If laws remain a necessary evil, and if the prudent man, in this era of transition, must refrain from using violence against the existing law, he shall at least do his utmost to hasten the advent of the happy time, when all healthy-minded men unite in the spontaneous harmony of their desires. Anarchy, therefore, is the ideal towards which the thought of Godwin is drifting, and the very

---

made him the chief intellectual representative of the most advanced party. His novels include: *Things as they Are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams*, 1794; *St. Leon*, 1799; *Fleetwood*, 1805; *Mandeville*, 1817, etc. He published as well essays (*The Enquirer*, 1797); tragedies; a *Life of Chaucer*, 1803; a *History of the Commonwealth*, 1824–8. See *An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice, etc.*, edited and abridged by R. A. Preston, 1927; K. Paul, *William Godwin*, 1876; studies by Ramus, 1907; Gourg, 1908; Roussin (Paris), 1914; F. K. Brown, *The Life of W. Godwin*, 1926.

elements of fact which must enter into the soluti
problem—this doctrine projects on to the immedia
the abstract lines of a necessarily distant ideal; a

is of uneven merit and somewhat confused, wri
forcible and at times declamatory style, but enlive
sincere passion for justice. It touches upon delicate
which it has the merit of raising, with more wisdom a
than is usually conceded. It is a century in advanc
theories, which are to-day accepted, or have become s
as to be no longer formidable. It points out ho

dependence. It urges the need for co-education, for a
system of teaching; upon love, marriage, and family
ship, its arguments have a wholesome savour and a
of opinion, and are being gradually incorporated in
life of our times.

The ideal which coloured the theories of the revolutionary thinkers appealed too vividly to certain imaginations, for the novel of the time not to give it expression. But here the effort is mediocre, and interesting only from the historical point of view. There was in the new faith, when once it won the mastery of minds, a magnetism so powerful that all sense of discrimination, as of artistic choice, became subjugated to its influence. Those among its disciples who, in the end, were able to escape, did regain, along with their independence, the power of translating into a language of noble beauty the story of their lost illusions.

In this sphere also Godwin is the most outstanding figure. His novels, despite their glaring faults and stretches of barren monotony, retain a vigour which is not without effect. This they owe not to their doctrine, but to the temperament of the writer, who is keenly attracted to any analysis of a searching and complex nature, and who in building up his plot allows his imagination to dwell fondly upon the emotional influence of terror—in a manner akin enough to that of Mrs. Radcliffe's school. With other novelists, the zeal of proselytism encourages the *naïveté* of a naturally simple art. Whether their revolutionary ardour leads them towards a complete vision of a regenerated humanity,[1] or whether less direct propaganda takes a more discreet form, even veiling itself at times, the aesthetic values nearly always lose through a didactic thesis, by which life is divided into opposite camps, in accordance with the rival forces of social good and evil.[2]

Those novels are fanciful, despite the element of seriousness which permeates them. They show the drift to Romanticism in the free scope which Godwin gives to his sentimental imagination; but the attempted pathos and the inventive talent of the writer scarcely possess any original or even striking qualities. A new movement in art is never exclusively the result of a general moral preparation. What is

[1] In *Anna St. Ives*, 1792, by Thomas Holcroft (1745–1809); see *Life, written by Himself*, ed. by E. Colby, 1925.

[2] Mention may be made of Charlotte Smith (see above, Chap. III, sect. 2): *Desmond*, 1792; of Robert Bage (1728–1801): *Man as he Is*, 1792, and *Hermsprong*, 1796; of Mrs. Inchbald (1753–1821): *A Simple Story*, 1791, *Nature and Art*, 1796; of Mrs. Opie (1769–1853): *Adeline Mowbray*, 1804. It is possible to add to this list the name of a somewhat different type of authoress, Miss Edgeworth (1767–1849): *Castle Rackrent*, 1800; *Belinda*, 1801; *Moral Tales*, 1801, etc. Her work tends rather towards the novel of social pity and humour than to doctrinal ideas. Her episodes of Irish life retain their vividness of description. Her work is very far from being negligible, and exercised an influence on Sir Walter Scott.

Sentimental drama leading to Romance

longer interest any one save the scholar.

Th...

write

scope

to-day to share the latter's destiny. Before 1789, we find

of observation, together with her properly theatrical gifts, are by no means indifferent in their appeal, sets out to plead the cause ... ness of heart, ... which after ... odwin. Holcroft[3] preaches the same gospel, but in a more blunt manner, being more explicit in his intentions; yet it must be admitted that he has life and movement. The younger Colman[4] after interweaving morality with his love for nature in an exotic setting, endeavours to incorporate it in scenes drawn from reality. If, however, this group of writers has left no great work, it is not due to false aesthetic principles.

[2] 1745–1833: *Percy*, 1777; *The Fatal Falsehood*, 1779. She was a prolific

parodies.[1] But with the triumph of the Revolution in France and the activity of its partisans in England, the instinctive desire for social preservation is alarmed; and the friends of order in their turn seize upon the weapon of ridicule. The excess to be feared seems no longer one of timidity, but rather of rashness. Irony is now on the side of a traditionalism which claims to be inseparable from good sense.

This cult of tradition, narrow and dogmatic, is stimulated to a remarkable vigour by the assurance that it has the broad support of national sentiment. The tone of the *Anti-Jacobin*[2] cannot be mistaken; it expresses both a temperamental and a racial hostility, in which patriotism, religion, devotion to the past, and the love for all accepted forms of discipline rise up horror-stricken against a contagious, manifold madness, which threatens all the altars of the nation's gods. The France of the Directory is jeered at and vilified, slashed for the Revolution whose fundamental ideas she has inherited, and no less for the new order which she painfully tries to build up. Her English partisans are scourged and dishonoured. Never has hatred, nourished by all that springs from the revolt of mind, heart, and instinct, by national passion and social fear, given vent to so terrible a denunciation. And feeding on those deep roots, the inspiration has an easy, telling verve. The wit in that collection of lampoons is very rarely delicate; the tone is every way brutal. Yet in the sneering and insulting attitude it adopts there is evidence of an often happy, at time superior talent. The burlesque vein which it has tapped furnishes it —as in the case of Erasmus Darwin and *The Loves of the Plants* —with parodies of extreme ingenuity, of great value as verbal achievements; and when the satirical impulse gives way before the serious passion which lurks in those violent pleasantries, and which bursts out in a heartfelt call to the genius of England, that poetry, still classical in form, reaches a sinewy and simple eloquence.

As an incentive, not only against the menace from abroad,

[1] The *Criticisms of the Rolliad* appeared in the *Morning Herald*, and were followed by the *Political Eclogues* and the *Probationary Odes*, of analogous inspiration. This method of literary attack found an ally in 'Peter Pindar' (see above, Chap. V, sect. 2). A collected edition appeared in 1791.

[2] *The Anti-Jacobin* appeared from November 1798 to July 1799. Its chief founders were George Canning (1770–1827), John Hookham Frere (1769–1846), and William Gifford (1756–1826), the future editor of the *Quarterly Review*. A collection of selected pieces was published by H. Morley (*The Anti-Jacobin, etc.*, 1890); see *Poetry of the Anti-Jacobin*, ed. by L. Rice-Oxley, 1924. See G. Festing, *John Hookham Frere and his Friends*, 1899; R. B. Clark, *William Gifford, Tory Satirist, etc.*, 1931.

but against the more dangerous madness which is creeping into the national consciousness of England, and awakens a belief in a justice based on the equality and fraternity of pe[illegible]
An [illegible]

[illegible]

sincerity through the genuine power of a naturally fervid thought, which has an end in view, advances towards it, and discovers itself gradually, as it develops, through its own motion. His impassioned arguments are enough controlled by his will to be orderly; but the logical plan which they seem to follow is not really the deepest and innermost; we feel that, when present, such a plan is superadded, and serves only to lend more accuracy to the progress of a demonstration, the [illegible]

[illegible]

images do not always testify to a perfect taste; but they are always striking. The language is cadenced, obeying a desire for proportion, dignity, and harmony, which instinctively tends to regular measures and periodic sentences, but submits at will to the necessary variety of effect, turning then to short, sharp-edged statements; and thus the rhythm admits of all the irregularities which are called for by the living flow of the speaker's voice.

The public speeches of Burke, and the treatises which he wrote to support various causes, belong equally to the literature of argument; they fall under the category of political eloquence. Now this kind of oratory shone with particular brilliance during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century. Hardly has Junius become silent when the conflict with America opens in Parliament and before the country at large; a prolonged struggle, in which the voice of Burke still sounds to us more audibly than all, but where many other voices commanded the attention of the time. Once this quarrel has been settled, the strong bearing of the Pitt Administration arouses intense opposition; the mental weakness of the king raises the question of a regency; 1788 sees the commencement of the trial of Warren Hastings, which only ends in 1795; and lastly, with the fall of the Bastille, the French Revolution becomes a daily problem, rousing the antagonism of parties to a pitch of excitement.

If during these troubled times the discussion of important matters of State takes on a new aspect, the change is traceable as well to other reasons. A broadening oligarchy accepts the more frequent collaboration of public opinion, while the middle classes, enriched by industry, now openly claim a share in the government of the country. Then the publicity given to parliamentary debates is no longer opposed. Finally, English classical prose, now fully developed, is a subtle instrument which lends itself both to ordinary discussions of facts, and to the more ambitious efforts required of it by an age of oratory—an age of sentiment, when reason retains all its prestige; and when, from one end of Europe to the other, a uniform culture inspires a common confidence in discussion, in words, in the power of conviction, and in the goodwill of all thinking minds.[1]

[1] The orators of the epoch, besides Burke, include Charles James Fox (1749–1806: *Speeches*, 1815; see biography by Trevelyan, new ed., 1923); Sheridan (see above, Book III, Chap. VI, sect. 5); William Pitt (17

or whether it was creative in the sphere of ideas. More than

reconciled. His political insight is made up of concrete percep-

to change certain of his ideas, it is not due to any unprincipled fluctuations in character, but rather to the progress which is

tion, all are complementary attitudes of one and the same mind. Undoubtedly, with Burke as with so many politicians in England and elsewhere, there was that secret shifting of

agreement and union of
to a just tradition; in 1
from tradition itself, wh

thought. Through the activity of consciousness and analysis, the social and moral creations in which from the time of the Renascence the original genius of the English people had revealed itself, are now one after another being defined. The theories of experimental philosophy and utilitarianism had already been formulated; political liberalism after 1688, and after Locke, had been given the matter-of-fact expression

1808; *War Speeches*, ed. Coupland, 1915; *Life* by Stanhope, 1862; study by Whibley, 1906); Henry Grattan (1746–1820. *Speeches*, ed. Madden, 1859, *Life*

which it required. British conservatism is taken by Burke out of the dim regions of preconceived ideas into the broad light of open discussion. A supreme consecration, and perhaps inevitable, but nevertheless dangerous; for there are religions—and a fervent belief in the superiority of life over intelligence is undoubtedly one of these—which gain nothing by being explained or defined in principle. However it may be, the strongest groups of instincts at the core of the original British genius has been solidly massed together, and endowed with a more distinct existence, from the time when Burke described it; at the same time, that body of moral forces has ever since more clearly revealed its bold defiance of reason. All the political ideas of the Conservatives and the Traditionalists originate in the teaching of Burke. Disraeli's real master was Burke, and no other.

His systematic hostility to the French Revolution denies and destroys the effort of the mind to build up a better world in accordance with its own requirements. He will not grant more intelligence or more justice to human things than the proportion which nature allows; and in the evaluation of that quantity, he interprets nature according to her ancient and declared will. What has been will be, not because progress and change are impossible, but for the reason that the laws of life govern all our desires, and that these laws are all embodied within the societies that at present exist and live. Any lasting growth is essentially organic; and the delicate organism of the social body cannot bear the sharp edge of intellectual thought, without perishing from its contact. The sacred majesty of an irrational order of things is thus given its genuine foundation, a mystical one; it is based on the mysterious decisions of a Providence who, having created evil and inseparably bound it up with good, has thereby intended to refuse man any hope of seriously reducing the former, without grievously impairing the sum of the latter. In its deepest implications, the doctrine of Burke is at one with the Christian spirit of pessimism.

To be consulted: *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. xi, Chaps. I, II, XII; Cestre, *La Révolution française et les poètes anglais*, 1906; idem, *John Thelwall*, 1906; Conway, *Life of Thomas Paine*, 1892; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. v, 1905; vol. vi, 1910; Dowden, *The French Revolution and English Literature*, 1897; O. Elton, *A Survey, etc.*, 1920; A. Gregory, *The French Revolution and the English Novel*, 1915; É. Legouis, *La Jeunesse de Wordsworth*, 1897; J. Morley, *Burke* (English Men of Letters), 1888; A. Nicoll, *A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama, 1750–1800*, 1927; Leslie Stephen, *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century*, 1902; Previté-Orton, *Politi… …tire in English Poetry*, 1910.

CHAPTER VII

PRE-ROMANTIC POETRY

the very atmosphere around them, they find as floati
suggestions the feeling for nature, melancholy, musing, t
haunting love of ruins and the past. Out of those elemen
they make up a temporary synthesis But their inspirati

but the stamp of artificiality is upon all their work.

With Burns and Blake, the vigour of personality at la
triumphs over literary convention. The one rediscovers t
spontaneous truth of the heart; the other spiritualizes la
guage, melting its hardened crust, and so restores its form
purity. The secret of Blake is none other than that

the Romanticists.

[1] William Mason (1724–97), the friend of Gray, also lived at Cambridg

methods of his friend, he has not the gift of his inspira
His tragedies, prompted at once by a scrupulous classi
and by a lively historical imagination, are interesting eff
but entirely artificial. *The English Garden* is not withou
appeal; a feeling of tenderness, a true taste for simplicity
for nature in its freedom, strive with the most conventi
style, a professedly didactic purpose, and a descriptive rhe
as cold as it is ornate. Certain of the deeper preferenc
English sensibility are expressed in it; but they are voic
a borrowed language, and there is no sign that the w
finds such a style inadequate.

Beattie[1] obeys a kind of vague instinct that the p
medium is in need of renovation. Venturing upon a
subject, he turns to the Spenserian stanza for an ample
beautiful rhythm. He handles it clumsily enough but
without some pleasant effects.

His other poems can be passed over, except a short
tation, *Retirement*, where there is a note of sincerity.
Minstrel is a work of vast conception, still didactic in th
but with the added interest that it seeks to portray the
life of the mind, and thus affords even in the matter
the possibility of a lyricism which will be new and psy
logical. Beattie proposes as his subject the developme
a past: Wordsworth's idea in *The Prelude* will be no o
But Beattie clothes his story in an atmosphere of legend,
introduces in a medieval setting the wandering singer w
Macpherson and Percy had already endeared to their rea
imaginations. His craving for personal expression ten
give both his subject, and the metrical mould into whic
has chosen to cast it, a note of meditative tenderness w
is at times pleasing; while the artificial elements of the
—its false archaism, its moralizing theme, its still convent
style—fail to spoil the charm to be found in the true a
ciation of the poet for the wild aspects of Scottish sce
In the landscapes called up, in the emotion, and in the n
of the language, the mind as well as the senses finds a s
of harmony and a wealth of romantic suggestion. At
times, the abstractions are predominant. The second c

[1] James Beattie (1735–1803) born in Scotland, became professor of
philosophy at Aberdeen, and wrote, in addition to several poems, an *Es*
Truth (1770), which was an attack on Hume. He was also the auth
Essays (1776), and of moral and critical *Dissertations* (1783). His main
The Minstrel (1771–74), unfinished, was very successful. *Poetical Wor*
Dyer, 1866. See Forbes, *Beattie and his Friends*, 1904.

which recalls *The Excursion* as the first does *The Prelude*, tends to be dryly philosophical

The work as a whole has its beauties, and, if compared with that of Wordsworth, seems surprisingly prophetical. The monotony of the measure, and the weak features of the style, do not altogether blot out some very commendable intentions —as, for example, the striving after a deep-felt and serious simplicity—which, taken up again by other writers, and much more fully realized, will prove to be creative.

This progress can be seen to a certain extent in the work of Bowles.[1] With him the quiet melancholy awakened by the contemplation of nature is expressed in words of moving simplicity. His *Sonnets* often speak the language of the heart; and although their inspiration tends to flag, and they do not [illegible]

[illegible]

farmer; he worked in the fields and received a scanty education, but he reaped [illegible]

[illegible]

what is otherwise the relatively simple evolution of English poetry. The influence of a half-foreign nationality, and the racy vigour of a son of the soil, quicken in him the germ of an unexpected originality. He is an innovator, but not after the manner of his English contemporaries.

The eighteenth century in Scotland sees the development of a literary renaissance. The most noteworthy figure after Allan Ramsay,[1] in a long and uninterrupted line of gifted writers, is Robert Fergusson, who died at an early age, leaving part of his work in the original Scots dialect.[2] Burns pondered over and assimilated that tradition and those examples. He felt the exceptional value of a truly instinctive expression, born of experience, and steeped in the direct, sincere quality which words acquire when they are part and parcel of the everyday life of a people. Moreover, in those models he could find the first faint trace or outline of a national art: realism, humour, a lyricism which never loses sight of reality, and whose emotion is rarely free from a strain of malice. He has proclaimed his indebtedness to those predecessors. Every historical outlook is wrong but that in which Burns is regarded as heir to their line, the last and greatest of all. But his debt also extends to poetry south of the Border; he read Pope, Thomson, Gray, and Young, and found in their school the discipline so necessary to check and direct the spontaneity of his style. A number of his poems are written in normal English; and these are certainly not all of an inferior order, though many are artificial.

It is difficult, therefore, to define exactly the position of Burns as regards the literature of his time. The language he employs is for the most part simple, full of power of expression that is as yet undiminished; his inspiration, traceable to his immediate environment—country life, nature, love, the scenes and manners of village society—has all the freshness of spontaneous creation. And besides, this artistic matter has already been given definite shape; the Scots dialect is a literary instrument; Burns draws on a wealth of themes and rhythms of a specially intense character. Above all, he has the personal gift of an exceptionally precise, clean style; his mind combines the clearness which comes of understanding, with the easy turn of thought and language which is the reward of just and concrete impressions. From these con-

[1] See above, Book II, Chap. II, sect. 9.
[2] Anglo-Scots, a dialect derived from Northern English.

[illegible]

The quality of the work of Burns is that of a superior 'classicism,' in the aesthetic sense of the term; a classicism [illegible]

[illegible]

all sorts of tendencies. This is not to say that it is psychologically neutral; it has as it were its centre of gravity, and is more an art of the intellect than of the emotions. Yet it is in close touch with all the human element in life. Compared [illegible]

[illegible]

heart or of the head; his moments of absolute melancholy are few; his soul is healthily robust, too strong to be mortally wounded by the pangs of life, too sane to be overcome by any ecstasy.

A manly sense of liberty is the animating force of his genius. Essentially free-minded, he respects the spiritual kinds of greatness, and makes allowance for all other kinds with courtesy, or, as the case may be, with irony. Burns is deeply aware of the dignity and the equality of men Before the [illegible]

[illegible]

pokes fun at the devil, makes free with the theme of eternal

damnation, and laughs at the secret troubles which beset the Puritan conscience. He opposes a good-natured frankness to the outward show of austere demeanour, and maintains that true virtue lies in generosity. His private life, his friendships, his love affairs, his marriage, and his paternal feelings, are all reflected in his poetry, the faithful mirror of an existence which has made a full and open confession of itself.

His work is of a mixed nature. A great part is composed of fugitive verse, short poems, mere sketches one might say, jotted down from day to day, in most cases without any great depth of meaning, although the touch of a master is evident; or again, occasional poems, lacking in real inspiration. What remains is almost entirely of the first order; whether it be that realistic imaginative verve, so lively and yet so sympathetically human, which evokes the truculence of *The Jolly Beggars* and the wondrous adventure of Tam o' Shanter; or the still inoffensive mockery which gibes at Doctor Hornbrook; or that which penetrates with keener irony the secret grudges harboured up in *Holy Willie's Prayer*; or again, the sterling strength and frankness cast into the ballad form of *John Barleycorn*; or lastly, the fresh and graceful simplicity of the idylls and elegies, where the atmosphere is either one of tenderness or one of sad regret. Nothing could be more varied than Burns's inspiration, destined as it was to spread over only a few fruitful years.

To the foreigner, and even to the uninitiated Englishman, the language of Burns's Scots poems offers some difficulty. The reader finds a glossary indispensable; but when once the linguistic obstacles have been surmounted, the use of dialect will lend greater charm to the work. It breathes a spirit of *naïveté*, and at the same time has a strain of lurking slyness; it conjures up a peasant-like atmosphere of shrewd observation and genial good nature. Such dialectal forms imply and suggest a power of perception which is essentially concrete; they reveal a keen sense of character and of ridicule, while at the same time they have a canniness and an impassibility pregnant with mockery. Not only do they favour the introduction of the humorous element, but they are themselves already part and parcel of it. Indeed there is nothing more essential to the poetry of Burns than this inborn gift of quiet mirth, of a gaiety which brings with it into almost everything a touch of fine irony; it is the expression and the

playful revenge of a personality which judges life without embittered rancour and loves it without illusions.

Burns has been as successful with the metre of his poems as with the language. He cannot be termed a creator in this sense, because he has borrowed from his predecessors, and is in no small way indebted to national popular song. The

poems are written in the traditional six-line stanza—four long interlaced with two short—which appears in each instance to end in a pirouette, a sly comment, or the brief avowal of some bestirring emotion.[1]

new fecundity by renouncing what have proved to be exhausting and fruitless ambitions; by returning, through simplicity, to its own deeper powers; by resuming contact with the elementary energy of the subconscious. That rule which holds in the case of individuals is no less binding in that of collective minds. English literature at the close of the eighteenth century is pregnant with a new intuition, which it seeks laboriously to discover by means of a parallel and forced heightening of the tone in style and in feeling. It is then that with Blake, just as with Wordsworth a short time later, an absolute sincerity, a mystic renunciation, the boldness of a self that offers itself in its nakedness, reveal the treasure of a yet untapped spirituality, which, inward and secret as it was, still lay within easy and direct reach; and that literary expression from these fresh sources is rejuvenated and renewed

he is much less occupied with theory, and shows less self-consciousness; his new departures follow no set programme. No reformer ever was more thoroughly ruled by instinct. This is why in certain directions, and at the very first attempt, he goes farther than Wordsworth. But if he surpasses the latter in the wealth of his prophetic gospel, as in the simple purity of his inspiration, he lacks his sense of balance. For the working out of a literary technique, and the application of a doctrine to the rules which preside over the art of words, what is wanted is a cool judgment. However unique and exceptional the part played by Wordsworth may have been in reality, he is still in our eyes the leader of a school. Blake, on the contrary, was and remains a solitary figure.

His extreme originality kept him apart from the general public, and official recognition. Only a small group knew his genius or dimly felt his greatness; and he pursued his indefatigable labour in relative obscurity. Never did a temperament show greater individuality. He felt some influences; but in his mode of thinking, in his imagination, and in his artistic tastes, all his main decisions are solely his own. He invented or re-created for himself all that he set his hand to. His drawings bear the stamp of a characteristic and inimitable vision. His poetry deals in the subtlest kind of symbolism with a skill that cannot be matched. His philosophy is a series of intuitive flights into the realm of the Absolute, soar-

---

poetry and painting equally attracted him. Apprenticed to an engraver, he studied at the Royal Academy, but gave up the orthodox ways of art, preferring to earn his living as an engraver of illustrations for various publishers. The printing of his *Poetical Sketches* (1783) was paid for by his friends. With the help of his wife, he printed and published by an original process the illustrated text of the *Songs of Innocence* (1789), *Songs of Experience* (1794), and the 'Prophetic Books,' which include *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1790), *America* (1793), *The Book of Urizen* (1794), *The Book of Los* (1795), *Milton*, *Jerusalem* (1804). At his death he left numerous unpublished fragments in prose and verse, notably *The Four Zoas* (1800?). His work as an illustrator and engraver was also very considerable. *Works*, ed. Ellis and Yeats, 1893; *Poetical Works*, ed. Sampson, 1905, 1913, 1921; ed. Ellis, 1906; *Writings*, ed. by G. Keynes, 1925; *Prophetic Writings*, ed. by Sloss and Wallis, 1926; *Poems*, ed. Yeats (Muses' Library), 1893; *Letters*, ed. Russell, 1906; *Selections from the Symbolical Poems*, ed. Pierce, 1915; *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, by G. Keynes, 1927; *Prophetic Writings*, ed. by D. J. Sloss and J. P. R. Wallis, 1928. See the biographies by Gilchrist, new ed. 1906; by A. Symons, 1907, and M. Wilson, 1927; studies by Swinburne (new ed., 1906); Benoit, 1906; Ellis, 1907; P. Berger (*William Blake, Mysticisme et Poésie*), 1907; Saurat (*Blake and Milton*), 1920; Gardner (*Vision and Vesture*, 1916; *William Blake, the Man*, 1919); Allardyce Nicoll, 1922; S. F. Damon, *William Blake, his Philosophy and Symbols*, 1924; O. Burdett, *William Blake* (English Men of Letters), 1926; M. Plowman, *Introduction to the Study of Blake*, 1927; H. C. White, *The Mysticism of William Blake*, 1926; M. L. Cazamian, *William Blake, poèmes choisis (traduction et introduction critique)*, 1944.

His mind works in open defiance of all the normal laws of logic; the language which he speaks, in the latter part of his work, is sometimes unintelligible. His thought, powerfully creative and free from all commonplace forms, has shaken itself loose as well from the most necessary conventions. It moves and has its being on the extreme edge of the thinkable, or even beyond, just as his eager expression will cross the bounds of the inexpressible.

The first poems of Blake, together with lyrical fragments

the poet to entertain their exuberant fancies; the predominant, almost exclusive theme of his poetry is the feelings of a child's impassioned soul; and the natural tone of its language is a moving simplicity, while its emotions possess a pure ardour. *The essence of Romanticism is here in these short poems*, whether the main subject be love and happiness, as in the *Poetical Sketches* and the *Songs of Innocence*, or the note of grief and rebellion against a world given over to evil be more pronounced, as in the *Songs of Experience*. The universe

tion which will be to Wordsworth the very source and inner substance of poetry. The elements of Romanticism are present, either actually or potentially; some—such as the sense of wonder, the contemplation of nature through fresh eyes, an intimate sympathy with the varieties of existence

endowed with a singular acuity of vision. Still, everything they see is bathed in a halo of mystery and beauty; there radiates from them meek pity no less than a holy anger. Blake's first style is in a way a juvenile form of Romanticism; and in those early songs English poetry, without being conscious of it, thoroughly undergoes the miraculous process of its rejuvenation.

Here the words welded together by a pure inspiration are as smoothly joined as the molecules of a liquid; they are perfectly adapted to the thought because they are as simple as possible, and the thought is itself simple. They do not strive after elegance, and yet they achieve it by means of their perfect adaptation. They do not aim at being intense, and yet are expressive because they are still soaked in the feeling from which they sprang. They have the cadenced flow of natural music, each word joining the next in a rhythm whose measure is indistinguishable from the accent of the words, or from the modulation of the phrase. Here is the melody, somewhat thin but supremely spontaneous, of the soul in its moments of of emotion. In the poetry of Blake the dried-up spring of Elizabethan lyricism may be said to well up again.[1]

These first poems, however, are not all of an equal quality. They are not free from prosaic touches; jarring or weak notes are heard, traceable to the over-impatient ardour of the poet. Here and there a painful feverishness invades and disturbs the quiet effusion of the thought. The 'Prophetic Books' are the work of an unruly genius, of a mature thinker whose presence makes the artist in Blake still greater, but who changes the exquisite poet into an excited visionary.

The doctrine of Blake is a confused assemblage of desires and impulses; it may be likened to a vast gospel of liberty. In its daring outlook upon everything it embraces all the political ideas of the French Revolution, with their social consequences; and even goes as far as the vague unlimited vistas of anarchic individualism, of free mysticism, and of the modern criticism of moral values. All settled criteria and faiths are there upset at a single stroke. Whether it be the orthodox religion of Christ, or the traditional notion of good and evil, or again, rational and scientific beliefs, the same revolutionary spirit reverses the previous order of things with undoubting en-

[1] The fragment, *Edward the Third* (*Poetical Sketches*), is very unequal, but has pages which recall in a striking fashion the best qualities of the Elizabethan dramatic style.

nborg and the unbending postulates of the mystics
ritan Republic; on the other, it foretells all the
eration by which contemporary psychology has en-
to overthrow the control of moral prohibition and
Blake is the prince of spiritual revolt; but his
[illegible] within the confines of his own

[illegible] une minds of scholarly
[illegible] she was bent upon a
[illegible] ion, did not even know
hement and sweeping [illegible]ial of all her cherished

old and yet coherent symbolism expresses these
ing them and at the same time emphasizing their
[illegible] one with another. The mythical vision of Blake
[illegible] or religious

[illegible]

s peopled by [illegible]
dea develops throughout a continued series of signs
[illegible] but where any attempt at a

[illegible]

t be said that Blake in the 'Prophetic Books' con-
ny of the normal conditions of literary or picturesque
To find a close connectedness between the suc-
ms is wellnigh impossible. The style has often
grandeur; the rhythm of the verse is ample, free,
t sometimes instinct with unequalled majesty, and
t intervals are scattered through vast stretches of

arid or obscure vaticination. The voice of the poet is still to be heard in passages of powerful evocation, just as his touch can be seen in frescoes whose broad sweep is as vast as the mind of the visionary who by now has taken his place. But his language, to be understood, demands a sight practised and trained in deciphering it; and for a century the 'Prophetic Books'—whose full wealth of content was revealed only at a recent date—have had no influence except on a small group of faithful admirers.

To be consulted: Angellier, *Burns*, 1893; Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century*, 1899; Berger, *William Blake*, 1907; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. x, Chaps. VI and VII; vol. xi, Chaps. VIII, IX, X; O. Elton, *A Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830*; vol. i, 2nd edition, 1920; Hugh Walker, *Three Centuries of Scottish Literature*, 1893.

—THE ROMANTIC PERIOD (1798–1832)

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST GENERATION OF POETS

rowing more definite, now acquire an extreme

/ordsworth and Coleridge (1798). With the one

mated them is the source of their artistic and
tion. They are indebted to it for the assurance
ty of their doctrine, for what establishes them as

omanticism is not one artistic principle in conflict
r. If Wordsworth and Coleridge do share for a

brief moment a controversial doctrine, their agreement very quickly gives way before their temperamental differences; and none of the writers whom posterity classes with them or among their immediate successors follows their example on this point. Romanticism in England is much less clearly than in France the affirmation of an innovatory aesthetic creed, as opposed to an orthodox art. English literature, of a less codified and disciplined nature than that of France, was less subservient to an explicit system of rules which had been, so to speak, officially registered by enlightened opinion, incorporated in manners, observed by learned bodies, and upheld by an Academy. The general public in England is in no way impassioned over the quarrels of different schools; indeed a battle such as that fought over Hugo's drama, *Hernani*, is unknown in that country. A new type of poetic creation, which for long has been in a state of obscure growth, now takes definite shape in certain pronounced traits, and declares its independence towards the past with a superior distinctness, which tends to become aggressive. But the initiative shown by Wordsworth is merely an episode—though of a very full significance—in a whole movement which on all sides is of even broader importance. And if one examines only the conscious principles at issue, one is forced to admit the presence of embarrassing exceptions. The cult of former values, and that of Pope, are still to be found in Byron; while the effort of Keats and Shelley is directed along lines which have little in common with the doctrine of Wordsworth and Coleridge.

English Romanticism does not consist in the triumph of 'self.' The personality of the writer has a characteristic place in it, because sensibility and imagination are of the very essence of individuality, whilst intelligence tends to the general. Everything considered, classicism laid stress upon the impersonal aspects of the life of the mind; the new literature, on the other hand, openly shifts the centre of art, bringing it back towards what is most proper and particular in each individual. This is a consequence, and not an initial cause.

Nor does English Romanticism primarily consist in a return to a national tradition, although in a real and deep sense it is that very thing. The idea of restoring the broken continuity of a formerly normal inspiration, which the attraction of a different art—an attraction enhanced by the spontaneous transformation in taste—had dried up at its source, is only partially and at intervals present in the conscious thought of

those poets who realize it. And when they do dream of reanimating the past, it is not altogether for its national and familiar quality, but on account of its intrinsic virtues, and of the moral attributes they see in it.

This is equivalent to saying, on the other hand, that English ...ticism is not the outcome of foreign influences either.
..., at this date, is much less
...e. The stimulating effect
... Germany or of

...
last fifty
...val. To
...n as two
to realize
...of these
...efined as
...voked or
...nd in its
...emotion
the frame
...ure. The
...ter spring
...ed through the
One of the two
...n to the other;
compact a way
... or derived part
...ting but difficult
problem, the ... ...icular case does
not affect the value of the general interpretation here put forth

This interpretation enables us to include and to connect together all those works customarily acknowledged as

[1] See below the bibliographical notes on Coleridge and Scott; and for an out- ... *Der Einfluss der deutschen Litteratur auf* ...

heart's desire is attained. A feeling of nostalgic strangeness

manticism

spirit.

Thus

discovery, the progressive lighting-up of an inner horizon, which extends beyond the limits of clear consciousness; it is the perception of objects in the magic garb with which our fresher vision invested them of yore, and which our tired eyes had forgotten. The obsession of distant centuries is the

perience. These tendencies in the Romanticism of 1820 are not mere elements of chance and accident, but inevitable and constitutive characteristics.[1]

the

ists, to such at least as reflect the character of the age. This

[1] The elementary fact of memory is accepted by our instinct as simple; it

representing the actual tone of this environment, save by a distant approximation.

At the time when Romanticism definitely makes its appearance, no sudden break is revealed in the movement of minds. As is ever the case, the passage from one epoch to another is effected by a silent and gradual transition. But moreover, it would be erroneous to believe that the Romantic period is marked by a general and common exaltation of souls. If one looks at society as a whole, this period does not coincide with a phase of exuberance, but rather with one of unrest and of a secret want of balance. There is no noticeable increase in the public cult of emotion; indeed, in certain respects, it would rather appear to be decreasing. Outwardly, at least, the sentimentalism inherited from the preceding age is contradicted by the elegant or cynical scepticism of contemporary manners. The court and the aristocracy, despite official decorum, set the example of loose frivolity. The English Regency recalls, after the lapse of a hundred years, that of the eighteenth century in France. The bulk of the nation, however, pursues the tack of industrial and commercial expansion; its practical standard is that of a utilitarianism which daily becomes more clearly defined. The *mal du siècle* does not possess in England the character of an almost universal epidemic; in its serious form, it only affects exceptional types; while in the average circles of cultivated society it only assumes the mild form of a moral disquietude, to which the unsettled condition of the political world contributes as much as, if not more than, the instability in the moral life itself.

The full completion of a new literature is here therefore a delayed effect; or rather an organic and complex phenomenon, the fruit of a long preparation, in which the distant past plays a part not less important than that of the recent past or of present circumstances. The state of society from 1800 to 1830 is as unable to provide an explanation of Romanticism, as it is on the other hand able to throw light on the details, the accidents, and even the internal divisions of the movement.

For in the sphere of politics, this period has a strongly marked and clear outline, the relation of which to the course of literature is as definite as it is simple. English Romanticism is not a homogeneous group of tendencies and writers. One must distinguish in it two successive generations, the limit of which would roughly coincide with the final downfall of Napoleon. Until about 1815, England is concentrated in a national effort

to combat the France of Revolutionary and Imperial times.

the permanent fund of British originality.

The mysticism upon which the poetical reform of Words-

there is no place for a foreign gospel of the rights of man.

ages. In the literary field, the Lake poets claim as their authority the examples of the Elizabethan Renascence; in the social sphere, they lay stress on the noble simplicity of a class in which traditional virtues are still lingering. It is in this light that they view their relationship—which is wholly one of hostility and defence—with the great political turmoil, the shock of which has never, in fact, ceased to produce a fecund bestirring in their souls.

About 1815, the situation is reversed. The Tory reaction has no long
it must di
which the
invested it. On the other hand, some economic and political forces are telling with added vigour in favour of an impatient liberalism. The middle-class business people and the citizens of the great industrial centres demand a share in public affairs as in electoral rights. The victorious struggle with the French empire leaves England impoverished, perturbed, and pre-occupied with internal problems The financial and agricultural crisis neutralizes the effect of commercial prosperity Stimulated by these facts, the offensive waged by agitators and philosophers alike against an oligarchic régime becomes fiercer than ever, while the selfish system of the 'Holy Alliance' in Europe is now faced with the growing hostility of the peoples.

In an atmosphere such as this, the second generation of

Romanticists breathes a spirit of moral revolt. Without abjuring the authority in art of the Elizabethan models, it refuses to recognize any prestige in tradition itself; and severely criticizes a present that is overruled by the fear of progress, as by conventional privileges and lies. By way of direct transmission or derived influence, this generation receives the heritage of revolutionary thought; it links up the impassioned intensity of its psychological tone with ideas of liberty and rebellion, with a keen determination to secure independence and realize justice, and with an exclusive cult of the beautiful. It is innovatory, critical, and readily places itself outside the pale of common obligations.

The writers of the first group, even if they run counter to orthodox habits of language and style, are nevertheless in moral harmony with a large majority of the public. They out-distance their contemporaries by the fullness of their spiritual life, but are not in a state of open conflict with them. The Romanticism of the Lake poets is a kind of purification and deepening of normal existence; it fronts society as an example and a permanent solicitation. It takes its stand upon the emotions that are common to all, and only seeks, by stimulating them, to idealize them into poetry. The second generation, on the contrary, sets up a decided opposition between the artist and his surroundings. It carries the ardour of feeling and imagination to a degree at which the average temperament would seem to perceive an excess threatening the balance of personality; and at the same time, it raises against the established order of things a manifold protestation instinct with generous passion, haughty sarcasm, or aesthetic detachment. Thus Romanticism becomes a literature of social conflict. It appeals to the vital forces of the soul against the rule of interests and cold calculation; it attracts to its banners the zealous and the young, but not without provoking the hostility of the average man.

In a parallel but different plane, meanwhile, the theorists of philosophical radicalism are actively pursuing a somewhat similar aim; but they employ a language that is more intelligible, while their reasoning stops far short of the enthusiasm or the irony of the poets. Despite this accord with an intellectual movement destined at least to a partial success, the Romanticism of 1820 deviates from the conditions necessary to ensure the durability of an artistic phase; it exceeds the average powers of the public. Born of a long psychological

in of was ds a sympathy which only

At a very early sta only roots that could number, it never becar

with the revolutionary faith. A spiritual bond was thus formed never to be broken. Enthusiasm for the brotherhood

[1] William Wordsworth, born in 1770 in the Lake district, came of a lower

poet can turn to use for the most moving effects. In accord-

semblance of truth as with the power to appeal to our feelings. By these inverse methods, the two writers tend towards the same end, the intimate fusion of the real with the ideal; and the bond which unites these elements is here none other than the new perception of the possibilities of 'wonderment' to be found in the simplest things—a discovery the germ of which

Radcliffe afforded of a supernaturalness that was of a wholly inner nature.

Thus the short tales of Wordsworth tend to stir up the emotions of a soul which opens itself freely to the mysterious reverberating echo of the simplest lessons of life. Suggestion is the real aim of this poetry, and the means it employs are at bottom of the same order as those which symbolism will utilize at a later date. In appearance, this poetry is summed up in an exact faithfulness to reality. With uncompromising bluntness in the *Lyrical Ballads*—a manner that tends to soften later—it throws up in a full light the meaner traits of a suffering humanity. Man is shown by it in the setting of nature, in strict accordance with daily observation, and without a trace of exaggeration or embellishment. As it is deeply alive to nature's influence upon man, there emanates from its brief and sober pictures a teaching of all the inexpressible lessons which the sky and the earth, the seasons and all living creatures convey to a sensibility upright and sound enough to remain receptive. The very first poems of Wordsworth (*Descriptive Sketches*, etc.), had borne testimony to the wealth of his sensory notations; and from the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* he draws upon these resources, which he uses with a severe self-command, for much more powerful effects.

Psychological intensity—the vibration of our consciousness in its contact with things—is a relative quantity, and one which depends in a large measure upon ourselves. The deeper the attention we bring to bear upon facts, the richer will be our feelings in connection with them; and it is to this depth of attention that Wordsworth would incite us. He constantly reminds us that nothing is indifferent to him who is able to see and feel. In the unlimited store of experience at his disposal, his choice, from a preference of the mind as well as of the heart, falls upon that in which the humblest humanity is laid bare; for the emotion which has its source in it is freer from all conventional alloy, and possesses at the same time a power of more moving appeal. His poems place themselves, and us, in a state of sensitive receptivity before the simple incidents of rural life. Meditation, tenderness, a philosophical and serious beauty, are born of the vast widening of the soul's horizon, brought about by a moral shock which is in itself of no significance, but proceeds to grow and idealize itself. Never did poetry more nearly approach a character of pure spirituality. As for the properly sensual value of art, it has no place here.

Being thus a collection of those intense and chose
which the world stirs in an attentive mind, whose i

instinct, but was unable at once to define. One m
interpret too literally the successive *formulae* which
worth puts forward for his poetic diction. The fi
beyond his thought; he never seriously believed that
means of expression should coincide altogether with
the most familiar speech. To him the *Lyrical Bal*

shape only by degrees. It is not to identify entirely the la

the artistic suggestion one has in view What wi
elements be? They will be of a kind which the sinc
direct ardour of the need of expression spontaneously
use. They are words of intense forcefulness, corres
to intense states of consciousness; but their intensity
wholly inner character, so that their distinctive fe
simplicity. Herein lies the truth at the core of the d
Thus the theory of style again joins up with the mo
social idealism, and with the mysticism of nature, the
tary powers of being are subjacent, and therefore pre

by which the proper tone may be
makes up for them to a certain extent, thanks to the
auxiliary devices: the presumption created by the c
verse as a medium, the prestige of poetry, the rhyth

as in Blake, here replaces the effort of concentration; depth of

charm of these effusions, it is chiefly through their boldness that they have been fruitful. They bring to a decisive realization the revival towards which all the previous literary transition was tending, they adapt a new or renewed form to a novel inspiration. The direct influence of Wordsworth acts perceptibly on very few writers, but he had broken the spell of an antiquated tradition, and his work inaugurated the reign of liberty. England awoke to this fact, not indeed at once, but by degrees, and in the course of a generation. All the English poets of the nineteenth century are indirectly his heirs.

The poet in Wordsworth is not always bound up with the reformer. At times we find him escaping, so to speak, from the more narrow scope of his programme, not by way of an

and rare a quality that they isolate the poet from his average fellow-men, and give him a language that is in itself, and not only in single terms, superior to that of normal experience. In its extreme application the theory of an impassioned simplicity terminates in explicit sublimity, and when once the soul is pitched in this key, the words which are naturally suitable are by no means simple words But the expression is not conventional on that account. In these poems Wordsworth does not violate the true principle of his doctrine, he merely frees it from the accidental limits imposed upon it by a legitimate reaction against an opposite excess, and so, beyond the Romanticism that must of necessity triumph, he rediscovers the highest art in a perfect harmony of thought and form.

The greater part of *The Prelude*, and the finest passages of *The Excursion*, realize this harmony through a remarkable

freshness, coming for the most part from free nature, the presence of which, be it gentle, calm, austere, or grand, yet ever wholesome, bathes the very inspiration of Wordsworth.

To him nature appears as a formative influence superior to any other, the educator of senses and mind alike, the sower in our hearts of the deep-laid seeds of our feelings and beliefs. It speaks to the child in the fleeting emotions of its early years, and stirs the young poet to an ecstasy, the glow of which illuminates all his work and the rest of his life. In our temperate climes, this nature is a safe guide to wisdom and goodness; it is instinct with the irradiating presence of the divine; in his adoration of it, Wordsworth's creed is a mystical pantheism. Besides nature, the concrete humanity of the humble, of those who live in contact with it, is a source of happy exaltation for the social philosophy of the poet; as also the enthusiasm for science, the intellectual religion of truth, which Wordsworth possesses without effort and without uneasiness, for he does not deem it possible that truth may be contrary to his moral optimism. Finally, a note of personal tenderness, an almost elegiac inclination to evoke the memories of his own childhood, makes *The Prelude* the most admirable record of a soul's progress towards the full possession of self, which is implied in the apostolate of a poetic calling. The acuteness of the analyses which Wordsworth has thus given of subtle facts, and clothed in a language now expressive, now more abstract, has been equalled only by the present-day study of the mind.

The second part of his career reveals an inspiration on the wane, a didactic purpose that grows too prominent, a petty concern for an orthodox fidelity to order. He has still moments of beautiful, grand utterance, as in his *Sonnets*, which rank among the most robust in the English language; he retains to the end his nobility of thought and of form. But all that is exceptionally original in him belongs to the period of his first maturity.

He is the psychological poet *par excellence*; and by consciously shifting the domain of art into the realm of the implicit he has prepared the way for the supreme enrichment of modern literature.

3. *Coleridge.*—Coleridge[1] possesses the most vigorous mind

[1] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, born in 1772, in Devonshire, studied at Christ's Hospital and Cambridge; under Southey's influence he adopted revolutionary principles, and formed with his friend the scheme of a settlement on communistic and philosophical principles ('Pantisocracy') in the New World. The instability of his nervous life, already evidenced by erratic impulses, led him to make constant use of opium. His poetic vocation was stimulated by

among the English Romanticists of the first generation; i
some of his pieces he is their most exquisite poet. But hi
work, his life, and even his thought are marked by an un

as its aim the greatest and the most exacting efforts. H

balance; and while he taught the moral courage which cul

development, until the time of their meeting, offers grea
analogies. Coleridge, like Wordsworth, went through

created language, come to him at the same time; and this is the hour when his social zeal, his hopes for mankind, freed from the hope of any immediate realization, are transformed into a spiritual idealism. Wordsworth's influence contributes to this result; but Coleridge is indebted to no one but himself for the more philosophic and mystical character with which he invests their common doctrine.

He goes directly to the supernatural. The other parts of the programme of the *Lyrical Ballads* have not the same hold over him, although he has a large share in their development. At a later date, and without any reserve, he will criticize Wordsworth's theory of poetic language, and his practical application of it; being more of an analyst, he will perceive the exaggeration of his friend's formulae, and will point out his happy inconsistencies. He himself is not at pains to seek simplicity by way of principle; it is already there in the purity of his form, the texture of which is without a flaw. Nothing more definitely conveys an impression of the inevitable word than the masterpieces of Coleridge, whether the quality of the style be conscious and laboured, as in *The Ancient Mariner*, or whether it would seem to follow closely an inner prompting, as in *Kubla Khan*.

Both poems are visions; in *Christabel*, as in *The Three Graves*, reality plays an increasing part, but that of the invisible still remains paramount. The very centre of Coleridge's art lies in his faculty of evoking the mystery of things, and making it actual, widespread, and obsessing. Even better than Wordsworth, because his is the more powerful imagination, and with him the haunting sense of the inexpressible is keener, less subservient to a strong moral purpose, he knows how to handle that species of the supernatural whose essence is entirely psychological. His somewhat wavering metaphysics, made up, above all, of desire, and only borrowing the fragments of a system from the German disciples of Kant, is based upon an intuition of the essential unity existing between our spirit and the divine. To descend to the depth of our consciousness is to discover the immanent being; in this way we are able to penetrate beyond the plane of appearance and sense; it is only in questioning ourselves that we can unravel the universe; the true, the only events are those of the soul, and the special domain of poetry is this inner theatre. Here will be staged the episodes and reactions which it narrates; and the feelings which it would arouse in us must be registered by our spiritual

eyes. The supernatural element in *The Ancient Mariner* is a hallucination, the outcome of remorse; by the most sober of methods *Christabel* suggests the terror of a vague menace. The vivid intensity of effects in the first poem, their subtlety and diffusion through the whole atmosphere of the second, are equally the work of a very great artist.

Coleridge possesses as well a vein of intimate effusion, a homely, religious inspiration, and the direct utterance of emotional moods, besides descriptive pieces of a type already common, but which he stamps with new characteristics. In such works the landscape is interwoven with the feelings, in accordance with an irresistible association, the wholly subjective quality of which he himself perceives and points out with sad clear-sightedness (*Dejection, an Ode*). He reaps a richer harvest through the senses than Wordsworth, they invest his impressions of nature with an extraordinary freshness and splendour, and at the same time with a shrewd, minute precision which reveals the analytical mind. The complex and original savour of his work is partly the [illegible]t of this blending of keen intell[illegible] emotionality of a lyric poet. [illegible] of his genius possess an [illegible] quality But these supreme moments were of short duration It would appear as though at an early stage the excessive ardour of his thought had dried up his poetic vein. The impoverished flow becomes intermittent, is broken and fragmentary, testifying more and more to a pathetic incapacity for any sustained inspiration.

An innovator in metre, he was not a great metrist, he scarcely put to profit his extreme keenness of perception, or the creative gift which he possessed in all he did, but he consciously formulated the return of Engl[illegible] principle of accent[illegible] tan[illegible] wh[illegible]y large scale, the [illegible]melody swelling or subsiding with the needs of the musical suggestion, while the light, ample cadence of the anapaest is introduced with delicate felicity among the shorter measures. This example of judicious freedom is at the source of the vast development in prosody which accompanies the expansion of modern English lyricism [1]

[1] See Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody*, vol iii, 1910, H D Bateson, 'The Rhythm of Christabel' (*Manchester Quarterly*), 1894; T S Omond, *English Metrists*, 1907.

As a philosopher, Coleridge has also been a sower of germinal ideas. His indebtedness to German philosophy has probably been overrated. He became acquainted with it at a time when his moral personality had already been formed, and he never was thoroughly acquainted with it. The doctrine of Kant, interpreted inasmuch as it founded a new metaphysics, encouraged his own tendencies. He took up the distinction between understanding and reason, only to push it to conclusions very far removed from those of Kant. He borrowed from Schelling what in his intellectual absent-mindedness he failed to acknowledge. Taken as a whole, his work reveals a general parallelism with the intuitive, idealistic, and historical movement of ideas which gives German Romanticism its essential character. But he himself declared that he was just as much the disciple of national tradition, and of Burke. He was not the master, but the immediate predecessor of Carlyle. John Stuart Mill saw in him the principal source of the reaction which an age animated with the will to believe, and basing its inner life upon the feeling of spiritual mystery, showed against the rationalism of mechanical explanations, and the extension of a scientific ideal to the things of the soul. Through the intermediary action of thinkers who were also believers—as F. D. Maurice—Coleridge's influence helped to nurture the decisive revival of idealism in the time of Carlyle, and in adjoining circles of thought.

Coleridge's fertile though discontinuous mind touched—and not in vain—upon many other subjects, such as religious philosophy, in which he attempted to establish Anglicanism upon a rational foundation; ethics, which he tried to recapture from the utilitarian system in vogue; politics, in which a passion for organic order and salutary authority led him even further than Burke in his aversion to all progress, but where he, on the other hand, discerned certain vices born of a social individualism.

It is, however, in literary criticism that his achievement is the most lasting. No one before him in England had brought such mental breadth to the discussion of aesthetic values. His judgments are all permeated by a trend of thought that is strongly under the influence of great doctrinal preconceptions; even in this domain he is the metaphysician. The well-known differentiation between imagination and fancy, which Wordsworth interpreted after his own fashion, is a way of laying stress upon the creative activity of the mind, as

it has a mystical significance. This feeling for
k existing between problems, together with this
rminglir
prives
ints.
ertain s
llumina
is even
uition of the profound unity of dramatic art.
as he is to reach to the heart of things, to find

ght the paths along which a central impulse has
to speak, towards all the fundamental ideas,
characteristics of a work.
—Competent critics were wont to class Southey [1]
fetime with Coleridge and Wordsworth. Since
er, his fame has singularly waned. To-day he is
d of the Lake poets. Almost the whole of his

even that. He deceived certain people because he shared the theories and the effort of the new school of poetry. Of the revolutionary sins of his early youth, on the other hand, he repents with an even more reassuring prudence than that of his companions; to national sentiment, to the spirit of an age carried back by the instinct of self-preservation towards the traditional order of things, he gives more absolute pledges; and being less original, he has a greater appeal for the average taste of his time. He was made poet laureate long before Wordsworth. From the day when he found himself without the support of a group of writers, and lacking a political or social setting for his work, his own claims to recognition showed themselves to be inferior. He deserves to be remembered, but it would be vain to attempt to revive his glory.

His longer poems are imposing structures, erected by meritorious labour, in which despite the brilliancy of certain details there reigns a monotonous tedium. Their conception is false. Southey is still unconsciously subservient to the aesthetic purposes of the eighteenth century; and he writes, not from a genuine need for self-expression, but in order to fulfil the programme traced out, as it were, by an obligation of the mind. He commits to verse a vague, exotic mythology, the visions and customs of Arabia, Mexico, and India, and so deprives himself of the advantage of a real humanity. His imagination, moreover, obedient to moral discipline, is unable to bring to this phantasmagoria the freedom which alone could give it charm. A biblical or Christian background, sentimental and puritan preoccupations, find themselves strangely associated with the Oriental setting of the *Arabian Nights*. *Thalaba* is a vast epic allegory in which some beautiful episodes are enacted; *Kehama* is still more arid; the first part of *Madoc*, and above ll *Roderick*, in which the surroundings and the subject make s feel more at home, and where the emotion is more sincere nd natural, sustain well enough a tone which though austere s not without grandeur.

Southey, like his friends, wished to acquire a pure and undorned style; and in this he has achieved a fair measure of ccess. He aims at a simple sobriety of expression, at the oving appeal of elementary emotions. But he has not the werful concentration of Wordsworth, the radiant force of spiritual lyricism, nor Coleridge's thrill of the supernatural. s modest and realistic notations look naïve, while his preon is prosaic. Besides, he cannot rid himself of abstrac-

tions. In quest of prosodiacal novelty, and eager for an

possesses great suppleness, but it lacks any vestige of art; the want of all perceptible regularity or symmetry stamps it with a wholly arbitrary character. *Kehama* adds rhyme to this scheme, but without permanence. After these unhappy attempts we find a degree of comfort in *Roderick* and *Madoc*, where there is a frank return to blank verse of five beats.

The shorter poems, of occasional or official character, fall

nothing relieves, not

The best are those

ere rapid inspiration

has been most directly expressed. Special mention must be made of the ode, full of a burning hatred, in which Southey's patriotism pours itself forth in execrating tones against Imperial France; and chiefly of the ballads and tales in verse, where he displays an unsuspected gift of forcefulness and humour. Whether the vein be one of imaginative terror or of popular joviality, the language here shows a nervous strength which at times recalls Burns These short pieces, by their themes as by their familiar and robust art, are related to the whole movement whose outcome is the *Lyrical Ballads*, to this Southey's receptive nature has added many and various influences—those of Scott, of the novelists of terror, of the German Romanticists—without the product losing in true originality. Widely quoted in anthologies, these ballads probably represent the only living part of his poetical output.

In his very copious prose there is one outstanding book, which every cultured Englishman has read, namely, *The Life of Nelson*, a fortunate volume, inasmuch as most of its value is derived from a subject of extraordinary quality. The moral biography testifies to limited powers of penetration, and in

striking distinctness; the almost undeflected development of its epic career is accurately traced; and the compact account of the many incidents in this life has all the interest of the

5. *The Poetry of Scott.*—At first glance one might be
into thinking that a similar fate had befallen the poems
Southey and those of Scott.[1] The latter were very popu
from the moment they appeared, being eclipsed only
Byron in the public favour: their immediate and comp
success marks the first official triumph of the new sch
Neglected, however, after 1815, by their author himself, v
had found a vaster field of activity in the novel, and ov
shadowed by the daring efforts of the second generation
poets, they knew a gradual decline. At the present day
general reader leaves them aside. But with unobtru
modesty, they continue to live; and as this test of a wh
century is probably decisive, everything points to a disc
survival.

They assuredly embody the intentions and influences
Romanticism; but they do not originate, as is the case w
Southey's epics, in an intellectual and theoretical sou
countless are the natural bonds linking them up with
Scottish soil, with a national past, with a wealth of memo
and sentiments which the poet shares with his immed
compatriots, and which a spontaneous sympathy ren
accessible to all British readers. The feudalism and medi
customs revived by Scott are part of a not very distant p
the clan spirit, the rich local life of a people steeped in tr
tions still retain something of that age; therefore the effor
imagination demanded of the reader is neither so great
so artificial as with other writers. *The Lay of the Last Min*
is definitely placed at the end of that belated transition wh
joins up the Middle Ages with modern times. The atmosp

[1] Walter Scott, born in Edinburgh in 1771, the son of a lawyer, ha
imagination fired from the earliest years by the traditions of southern
land. He studied at the university of his native town and prepared fo
Bar; but his literary vocation was revealed to him in the course of the ra
taken to collect legends and ballads. He learned German, translated
Lenore of Bürger (1795), the *Goetz* of Goethe (1799), collaborated in the
of Wonder of Lewis (1801): published a collection of popular poetry,
Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, 1802–3; then original poems: *The Lay*
Last Minstrel, 1805; *Marmion*, 1808; *The Lady of the Lake*, 1810; *The Vis*
Don Roderick, 1811; *Rokeby*, 1813; *The Bridal of Triermain*, 1813; *The L*
the Isles, 1815; *Harold the Dauntless*, 1817. After the publication of *Wa*
1814, he devoted his chief attention to the novel; but he still composed num
short poems (*Miscellaneous Poems*, 1820; *Poetry contained in the Novels*
of the Author of Waverley, 1822, etc.). For the rest of his work see below,
II. *Poetical Works*, ed. by Robertson, 1904; ed. by Lang, 1905; *Selection*
by A. H. Thompson, 1922. See Veitch, *Feeling for Nature in Scottish P*
1887, vol. ii; Morgan, *Scott and his Poetry*, 1913; Franke, *Der Stil i*
epischen Dichtungen Scotts, 1909; Sarrazin, *Poètes modernes d'Angleterre*,

of the poem is thus created by a direct intuition in which art
. . . the fervour of a warm

. . . the atmosphere which
belongs to the historical novels of Scott, with their humour, their colouring applied with a touch at once lavish and sure. The past is evoked in a spirit romantic before it is human. The choice of descriptive traits, the development of action, and the characterization are a trifle conventional. A secret complacency on the part of the author tends to incline everything towards picturesqueness, pathos, mystery, and even terror, as Scott indeed retains a trace of his youthful enthusiasm for the thrill of the German ballads and for the school of the supernatural. His Romanticism is a synthesis of all the elements

. . . with Scott are strongly individualized through his close familiarity with the Scottish landscape and social life.

However, the dominant characteristic of these poems is to be found in their sobriety of tone. They are subservient to an essential discipline and measure. The descriptive vein is always strongly controlled; the pictures of nature, whether charming, delicate, or powerful, are never luxuriant; tragedy with Scott never reaches the stage of horror, nor is the fanciful element ever developed at the expense of an implicit logic. A faint suggestion of irony hovers at times like a smile over the narrative. The style, with its ease and liquid movement, has remarkable clarity and a striking economy of means. The verse, supple and modelled on the undulating flow of the sentiment, is of a very rhythmic quality. Scott recognized his indebtedness to the model of fluid freedom offered by the

. . . extrava-
. . . ntellectu-
. . . perament
. . . the very
heart of Romanticism. He is too conservative by instinct to
b . . .

u . . .

passing fashion they link up with a balanced, normal art, whi a fresh inspiration has revivified. Yet the close proximity the novels will always do them harm, since they are too inferi to Scott's prose in the study and development of characte Beside them, on the other hand, one must not forget t shorter poems—whose form is often that of the ballad— which Scott has shown a more intense, at times outstandin gift of lyricism.[1]

To be consulted: L. Abercrombie, *Romanticism*, 1926; Barstow, *Wordswort Theory of Poetic Diction*, 1917; Beatty, *W. Wordsworth, his Doctrine and A etc.*, 1926; Beers, *History of English Romanticism in the 19th Century*, 19 Brandes, *Die Hauptströmungen, etc.*, vol. vi, 1876; English translation, 19 Brandl, *Coleridge*, 1886; Crane Brinton, *The Political Ideas of the Engl Romanticists*, 1926; *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. xi, Chaps. V, VIII; vol. xii, Chap. I; Carre, *Gœthe en Angleterre*, 1920; Cazamian, *L'Intuit panthéiste, etc. (Études de psychol. littér.)*, 1913; Coleridge, *Biographia Literar* ed. by Shawcross, 1907; idem, Chaps. I—IV, XIV—XXII, and *Prefaces* Wordsworth, ed. by Sampson, 1920; Cestre, *La Révolution française et les poè anglais*, 1906; Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, vol. vi, 1910; Elt *Survey of English Literature, 1780-1830*; new edition, 1920; Hazlitt, *The Sp of the Age*, 1825; Herford, *The Age of Wordsworth*, 1897; Legouis, *La Jeune de Wordsworth*, 1897; Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, 1837–8; new edition, 1903; J. Lowes, *The Road to Xanadu*, 1927; W. L. Mathieson, *England in Transiti 1789-1832*, 1921; Neilson, *Essentials of Poetry*, 1912; Oliphant, *Liter History of England at the End of the 18th and the Beginning of the 19th Centu* 1882; Omond, *The Romantic Triumph*, 1900; Pierce, *Currents and Eddies the English Romantic Generation*, 1919; F. C. Prescott, *The Poetic Mind*, 19 De Quincey, *Reminiscences of the Lake Poets* (*Works*, ed. by Masson, 188 G. R. Richardson, *A Neglected Aspect of the English Revolt*, 1915; Cra Robinson, *Diary*, ed. by Sadler, 1869; idem, *Henry Crabb Robinson on Boo and their Writers*, ed. by Edith Morley, 3 vols., 1938; Saintsbury, *History English Prosody*, 1906–10; Sarrazin, *La Renaissance de la poésie anglai* 1887; Symons, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*, 1909; Verri *Essai sur les principes de la métrique anglaise*, 1909–10; Dorothy Wordswor *Journal*, ed. by Knight, 1897; T. Watts-Dunton, *The Renascence of Won in Poetry* (*Chambers's Cyclopaedia of English Literature*, vol. iii), 1903.

---

[1] With this generation must be connected the delicate, intimate effusions Charles Lamb, who was closely associated with the enthusiasm, theories, a projects of Coleridge and his group. His best poems, with their nostal emotion, their penetrating simplicity, recall Blake and Wordsworth, but posse at the same time, an original note. (For the prose work of Lamb, see belo Chap. V). *The Works in Prose and Verse of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. Hutchinson, 1908. And among poets of less personal significance, such Charles Lloyd, there is a more distinct figure, Henry Kirke White (178 1806), whose early death at 21 took on a symbolic value for this Romantic a *Remains*, ed. by Southey, 1807–22; *Poems, etc.*, ed. by Drinkwater, 1908.

CHAPTER II

THE NOVEL

1. *Walter Scott.*—The poems of Scott belonged to th
generation of Romanticists. His novels,[1] in the or
chronology, belonged to the second; but the spirit anin
them is still that of the first. There is no indication o
author having been influenced by the change in m

develops with greater freedom in a field of wider ho
While the poetry of this age enlists a great number of the
brilliant talents, Scott's supremacy in the novel is sove
For nearly twenty years, everything is eclipsed by his
His pages have kept an incomparable charm and you
ness. Neither fashions nor the changes in taste have ha
serious effect upon them. Whether appraised or not
lightened opinion and the critics, they have remained

[1] The prose work of Sir Walter Scott comprises novels *Waverley*, 181
Mannering, 1815; *The Antiquary*, 1816, *Tales of my Landlord* (*Old Mo*
1816; *The Heart of Midlothian*, 1818, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, 181
Roy, 1818; *Ivanhoe*, 1820; *The Monastery*, 1820, *The Abbot*, 1820; *Ken*
1821; *The Pirate*, 1822; *The Fortunes of Nigel*, 1822, *Peveril of the Peak*
Quentin Durward, 1823; *St Ronan's Well*, 1824, *Redgauntlet*, 1824; *Tal*

popular, and seem almost entirely to have become part of th treasure of permanent literature, and been added to the fun itself of the national heritage.

It would be vain, however, to deny that the years hav encroached upon this work. It is not all of an equal quality o resisting power; and it was not given the careful labour whic alone assures perfection. It has, no doubt, the happy touch the divine facility, the wealth of a creation of genius. On feels that it wells up from a natural source; it is the outcom of a full inspiration, that has been already prepared by th assimilative play of memory, the activity of thought, th continual exercising of the imagination during half a lifetime Scott was intimately acquainted with the past of Scotland which he had explored in documents, history, and legend; h had lived through it again by calling it up in its original set ting, and had given it the reality of concrete form by discover ing its latent presence in the manners, traditions, and language in all the existing originality of a people. This unconsciou preparation had been so long and full that from the day whe the novelist and not the poet laid it under contribution fo pictures of a more ample scope, it appeared to be inexhaustible In it lies the deep value of these reconstructions of history, an by investing them with the gift of life, which it has rendere possible, it supplies them with the atmosphere of a full flavoured humanity. But Scott certainly allowed himself t be led away too much by the ease of rapid invention; an probably it is to this cause that must be traced, along with th few lapses in form, some more internal flaws which time ha brought into prominence.

These are nearly all reducible to certain insufficiencies of th writer's art, to devices which are too facile. In the centur which has followed, both the technique of the novel and th requirements of the reader have come to be modified; over an above the theories of the moment, a substantial agreemen has been reached concerning some demands which migh prove to be of a lasting character. We require sober truth an objective outlook upon things, or if the writer's fancy an sensibility become a law unto themselves, we are loath t let them have the benefit of an optimism which savours to much of banal convention to be interesting. Fiction play too important a part in the novel of Scott, and especially th fiction which does not wish to be treated as such. No on save the specialist suffers from the liberties he takes with

historical details. The conception of truth, with him, has

placency of his critical sense or artistic conscience. The author is too frequently butting in upon the story; the monologues of the characters, the set conversations of those who rise above the ordinary rank, lose all semblance of reality. The creation of atmosphere in the novels is brought about by a series of conjunctures which too obviously reveal a common

from which it would seem that a more severe taste has gradually receded. The conventional treatment of the love themes, as of the characterization of the young heroes and heroines, is in keeping with the fanciful tone of the plots, at least in some of their parts. There is in this whole series of effects a perspective such as that of the theatre, allowable, no doubt, as long as the treatment of truth is only summarily and superficially faithful, but here at variance with the deep and exacting spirit of accuracy that in every other respect animates the realistic imagination of Scott.

It must be recognized, however, that he benefits by the

slight import; they set a date upon the art of Scott, without ageing it. The only consequence is that the reader must more clearly and more consciously accept the part played by artifice, by one main fiction and by some derived postulates, in the production of an illusion which can in fact never be complete.

The essential point is that this illusion, in far the majority of cases, and if nothing intervenes to impair the normal elasticity of our sense of the real, is a wonderful success Scott makes us live again in past centuries, and makes innumerable human beings of his invention visible, familiar, and akin to ourselves; whether he entirely creates them, or re-creates their souls and borrows their names from history. His work is one of the happiest attempts ever made to evoke what is no longer extant; it owes this triumph to the imaginative intuition which Romanticism had stimulated, but also to a psychological truth

that is sufficiently deep, and to a grasp of man's nature
broad enough, to satisfy needs of our minds more co
than a taste for purely historical truth.

The novels form unequal groups according to their t
varying in number as in value. Scott loses his force
wanders from the solid ground of contemporary realit
from those features of it which are of a durable enough
to be looked upon as ancient; it is through the present
interprets and reconstructs the past. Therefore, the
he chooses by preference are not very remote; his fa
domain stretches from the Reformation to the las
struggles of the eighteenth century. He organizes his s
round the great religious or political conflicts which
these two hundred years most seriously impaired the
unity of the Scottish people; and as the Romanticism of
and imagination is above all attracted by lost causes,
Puritanism and to the allegiance of the Jacobites that t
the force of the tale the involuntary sympathies of the
are often drawn; a solid proof of the remarkable impa
of Scott, who as a Tory and a friend of order retaine
kindly feelings for the Stuarts, but who reproved fan
without reserve. It was his desire to keep the scales e
grant to all parties and men the same kindly interes
here he was almost always successful.

The novels which transport us to England or the Con
and abandon the opening years of the modern era
Middle Ages, betray this effort more distinctly; they
their aim less completely: yet they accomplish some ve
feats; although historians do not spare certain asp
Ivanhoe, they praise the atmosphere of the work, whi
generally agreed that the light shed upon Louis XI
time by *Quentin Durward* is not to be disparaged. Bu
when all is considered, there are no achievements in th
which can come up to the scenes enacted in those l
districts of Scotland, so beloved and cherished by Sco
for example, to the episodes whose setting is the capit
Heart of Midlothian, etc.). In the same way, the lands
evoked throughout with a poetic freshness, which is
of all impassioned ardour of exuberance; the descrip
nature, within these limits, is more widely treated in
prose than in his verse; but the stretches of heath, th
lands, the wild valleys of Scotland are more accurately
forcefully depicted than the vast forests of feudal Eng

Set thus in a framework of events largely fictitious, which, however, our sense of truth approves, and standing out against a background of nature and manners which are sufficiently

Scott's personages win our full approbation; there is no resisting their vitality. They offer a complete range of characterization, from the most rapid sketches to the most carefully executed portraits; their abundance and diversity astonish us. Their physical being, and the salient peculiarities of their moral being, are what always determine them. At times the analysis goes further, probing to the depths, and aiming at the most individual shades; but Scott is not preoccupied with the psychology that penetrates; he does not seek for complicated tangles of the soul, and consequently hardly ever comes upon any; on occasion he will be easily satisfied indeed. In certain cases he has desired to make a more searching analysis of a character, and has done so; but as a rule he sums up at one stroke the personality which interests him, grasps it with a vigorous hold, and draws its physiognomy with a broad, firm touch; and having once

it to the

sodic or

and who reveal themselves wholly to us in one flash. Despite the attraction of some impressive figures of rebels, ruined noble-

they are painted, his richest and most attractive gallery of portraits.

And this is because the humbler classes can best voice the

of all the illogicality which its complexity conceals, in an

alert attention to all the perceptible elements through which the solution of its problems reveals itself, in a spontaneously concrete appreciation of the qualities and paradoxes of things.

This deep fertilizing force of the Scottish mind makes its presence felt in all Scott's creations; it is the sole support of whole scenes, episodes, and characters, and is more or less intermingled with nearly all the other sources of interest. Even the pathos itself is rarely without an after-taste of it. His poet's thought elaborates and refines it, and makes it the spiritual aroma of his philosophy. This is the element which imparts to his work an all-pervading spirit of kindliness and light irony, and which tempers the satire with indulgence, the sympathy with amusement. At this degree of superior concentration, humour acts as a kind of twofold wisdom, blending, correcting, and especially relieving the one by means of the other, the bitterness of clear discernment and the sweetness of charity. This suppleness of a judgment which is ever conscious of what is relative becomes reflected in an expression intentionally transposed, which chooses indirect ways because the hearer derives an added pleasure from unravelling them, and because they better comply with the essential scepticism of a soul that refuses to be dogmatically absorbed in one set mode of feeling. Scott's humour has a ring of Scottish shrewdness and kindliness about it. This note is to be heard throughout his work, and lends a character of unity to the vast comedy of existence; it assumes a different key according to the environment, the age, and the sex of the persons who are shown to us; but a stronger affinity gives it all its clearness and charm in the language of simple folks; and the dialect of Scotland, in various degrees of raciness and purity, is intimately associated with it in its effects of full-flavoured and sly rusticity.

The passages in which this dialect predominates offer special difficulty to the uninitiated reader; but this is easily overcome; and at once, one comes to prefer them. Here it is that the language of Scott enjoys all its advantages. Its easy manner harmonizes with a familiar form of speech. In other places, it has great merits, and lends itself freely to lively or sustained narration, to description, to pathos, to reflections of a moralizing nature; but it does not keep up all these tones with an equal felicity, or rather there are some among these tones which are not happy in themselves. The edifying reflections, and interventions on the part of the author, imply at times

On the whole, the superficial flaws in form do not detract in any way from the deep merits of the work. Scott has the genius of the narrator; but he has the corresponding talent no less, and his tale is carried on by a very supple and very steady art, which sets up, develops, and works out to a final close, through a very varied series of moments, a symphonic com-
auses, picturesque
ith an instinctive,
of reality which
characterizes the various exchanges of talk, especially in the popular scenes, nearly always succeeds in at once convincing us.

The novel of Scott represents the triumph of Romanticism in the imaginative re-creation of the past, associated with all the diverse emotions which the tragic or comic drama of life can awaken. It therefore takes the place of the theatre, in which the literature of this period has produced no masterpieces. Certain of the inner tendencies of Romanticism are
ages,
, the
iper-
natural and the mysterious (*The Bride of Lammermoor*, *Redgauntlet*, etc). But by virtue of its humour, its sense of balance, the mental calm and self-possession it implies, it can also claim kinship with the psychological characteristics of classicism. By bringing Romanticism so near to the real and complete life of every day as to confound the one with the other, even if that life be a vanished and miraculously restored one, Scott has given Romanticism an average and normal value, a soundness, an immunity from any feverishness, that it does not possess even in the poetry of a Wordsworth.

2. *Realism; Adventure and Terror in the Novel* —Despite the illusion created by its superiority, Scott's work in the novel is not isolated, cut off from that of his contemporaries. He
dge-
one
verley

should make mention of Galt,[1] who in the course of an uncertain career had himself conceived before Scott the idea of exploiting the picturesqueness of Scottish life, but to whom the Waverley novels came as an encouragement and example. His best studies are confined to ordinary and familiar aspects of life; and by freeing this new form of literature from all the historical elements of Romanticism, they turn it in the direction of a minute, humorous, and tenderly inspired realism.

Among the diverse elements brought together in the work of Scott, it is indeed the realism which undoubtedly, after the history, proves the greatest force of attraction. Even in the success of imaginative fiction, literature retains its appreciation of concrete reality; and the distinctive feature of the Romantic novel, as a whole, lies in the boldness with which it adds new provinces to reality. The popularity of Hook[2] is due to the fact that he resolutely brings a democratic and modern spirit to bear upon his atmosphere and subject-matter. Marryat[3] revives the tradition of Sterne and Smollett; to the lively interest of his tale he adds a rich vein of humour, and by his painting of seafaring folks and their life he has conquered a field in which he remains one of the masters. Miss Mitford,[4] in her charming studies of village customs, her landscape descriptions, as exact as they are poetic, foreshadows both the *Cranford* of Mrs. Gaskell and the work of Richard Jefferies. Lastly, the psychological realism of Jane Austen

[1] John Galt, 1779–1839, born in the south-west of Scotland, led an eventful life and produced a very large number of diverse works. *The Annals of the Parish* was written before *Waverley*, but remained unpublished until 1821. See also *The Ayrshire Legatees*, 1821; *The Entail*, 1823. Similarly Susan Ferrier (1782–1854) wrote her first novel before reading those of Scott, but was one of the latter's literary followers (*Marriage*, 1818; *The Inheritance*, 1824; *Destiny*, 1831). With Croly, James, Ainsworth, Scott's influence is continued after 1830.

[2] Theodore Hook, 1788–1841, dramatist, improvisator, etc., published nine volumes of short stories, *Sayings and Doings*, 1824–8; numerous novels, including *Jack Brag*, 1837.

[3] Frederick Marryat, 1792–1848, after a career as naval officer, began with *Frank Mildmay* (1829) a long series of sea novels, including *Peter Simple*, 1834; *Midshipman Easy*, 1836, etc. See *Life and Letters*, 1872; study by Hannay, 1889.

[4] Mary Russell Mitford, 1787–1855, wrote for the stage with creditable success; but it is to her simple, fresh sketches of provincial life (*Our Village*, *Sketches of Rural Character and Scenery*, 1819–32), that she owes her privileged place in English hearts. In her descriptions of nature there is a strong local colouring, and the current of regional literature in the nineteenth century has one of its sources in her work, as in that of Scott or Galt. See her *Recollections of a Literary Life*, 1852; the study by C. Hill (*Mary Russell Mitford and her Surroundings*), 1920; *Mary Russell Mitford, her Circle, etc.*, by M. Astin, 1931.

is handled with a much less delicate touch, and with some worldliness, but not without force, by Mrs. Gore.[1]

Meanwhile, the most characteristic, though not the most brilliant, type of the Romantic novel, the model of which

ally, reaches one of the culminating points in its development with the *Melmoth* of Maturin,[2] a work of striking intensity The *Frankenstein* of Mrs Shelley [3] rises above the mere search

exists between this ardour of sensitive imagination and the

interest in the marvellous and the morbid, which entered into Byron's and Shelley's daily life during their sojourn in Switzerland (1816).

[1] C. G. F. Gore, 1799–1861; *Mothers and Daughters*, 1831; *Mrs Armytage*, 1836

CHAPTER III

INTELLECTUALISM AND POLITICAL LITE

1. *Romanticism and Intellectualism.*—The R
is not simple and single in its tendencies. It is
strong current of intellectualism which contin
thought of the eighteenth century, and join
scientific and critical age into which England g
after 1830. Nothing could be less Romantic,
respects, than the philosophy of this epoch, as i
in the works of the philosophers.

This psychological opposition between the
the sensibilities would be abnormal, if it were
fact as it seems to be at first sight. But a prec
period solves this paradox to a very large exten
to 1830, the highest grade of original literatu
moral pitch at which the average mind can l
ceptional moments. The Romanticism of th
out of harmony with the general attitude of
in these, towards an extreme intensity of imagi
a particular readiness and complacency, resu
long preparation represented by a half-centu
sentimentalism. This complacency remains pa
not broaden out into practical sympathy and i
history of manners no doubt reveals at that ti
and fashionable form of exaltation, openly pra
with acts which conform to the moral rules of
but such realization is rare, and only concerns
certain ages, and very limited human groups.

The literature which triumphs, and produ
fruits, finds itself through its every effort outsi
conditions of moral balance. It corresponds w
phase of the psychological rhythm, but can do
distancing it. It allows for a certain reserv
difference, even in those people whose compli
own success possible; and thus such minds, in
can tolerate moral attitudes and movements

by its principal element, not to be incompatible with a simple unity; from its intrinsic nature it must be manifold and diverse.

On the other hand, a moral synthesis in the opposite direction, or one that is very clearly distinct, is formed or rather develops under the stress of circumstances. It is by no means new; it carries on a tradition of some standing: that of classicism and rational philosophy as we have them in the eighteenth century. But economic and social forces enter more than ever into co-operation with it. Until about the year 1815, the pressure of the industrial classes and of commercial interests is held in check, without being annulled, by the conservative influences let loose in the struggle with France. Even then, and despite political disturbances, the nation does not cease to grow richer, while the new middle class pursues in secret its trend towards power. After 1815, its impatience to attain power knows no bounds, and breaks away on all sides.

Such is the main impulse which gathers, so to speak, round itself all analogous temperaments and tendencies, and which gives the features of this age so strong a trait of rational individualism. The movement is individualistic, in that economic activity has no end beyond the welfare of the individual, and also because it encounters on its way, as irritating obstacles, the inherited rules and customs of the governments of the past, founded on authority. It is rational, first, because in destroying the moral ties as well as the solidarity between men, it cannot claim to do so out of sentiment, but must seek justification in a clear notion of realities; secondly, because the practice of commerce and industry, by focusing all attention upon the reckoning of forces and tangible results, inclines the mind towards a lucid and positive perception, either of the facts, or of the laws which go to explain them.

Mere chance cannot explain the fact that utilitarian philosophy has largely recruited its disciples from the ranks of the business and moneyed middle class. From the day when this philosophy, which was originally disinterested, took the form of a programme of action, it felt the influence of the converging interests which bound up its cause with that of the *bourgeoisie*. The alliance thus formed enabled it to actualize its theories to a great extent, but at the same time somewhat narrowed its horizon.

With the advent of the second generation of Romanticists,

the separation between rational doctrines and
proper becomes greatly reduced. In its general
tarian thought is liberal and democratic; it is the
parallel plane with the revolt of the great writ
the order imposed by society upon the soul's des
contrary psychological nature, but analogous in
tendency, it finds itself confirming, at a distance
of the rebellious artists in literature; and certa
begin to reveal themselves between the theoris
poets. These partial and momentary similaritie
general spirit of opposition to subsist; everything
Bentham, Malthus, Ricardo, and James Mill form
striking contrast with Keats and Shelley, no less
Coleridge and Wordsworth. Their success, their
representative value, testify to the presence of a
duality in the very texture of the needs and moral
which go to constitute this age.

2. *The Utilitarians.*—There are several degrees
of liberal and utilitarian intellectualism. In its or
with the philosophers, the doctrine is concentrate
rational, and offers the aspect of a well connected sy
embraces the whole field of moral and social life.
stage, with the popularizers and publicists, ter
that are different stamp it with another characte

The pure theorists are not artists, and hardly
name of writers. Yet they occupy too important
the history of ideas for the historian of literature
them. They have each their individual traits; wh
lacking in relief. So naturally do their theses link
another, that in a very brief summary there is a
to merge them together. It is necessary, howev
the contribution of each, and to picture them in
relationship.

Born in 1748, Bentham[1] is a survivor of the

[1] Jeremy Bentham, 1748–1832, son of an attorney, studied
destined for the Bar, but devoted his whole lif
theorist of penal and political law, he publishec
duction to the Principles of Morals and Legislatic
A Plea for the Constitution, 1803; *Papers upon*
tion, 1817; *The Book of Fallacies*, 1824; etc. On the other
published in French from his manuscript, the *Traité de Légis*
pénale, 1802, the *Théorie des Peines et Récompenses*, 1811, etc. He
manuscripts, in part unpublished. Bowring published his
Science of Morality, 1834; retranslated the French version of
brought out an edition of the *Works* in 11 volumes

century; while his mind has been moulded according

His early writings are lively and pungent; along with a re
turn of mind, with self-control, and with a firm resolv

stant tension of an intellect that is absorbed by the the
application of ideas to things has a withering influen
the mind, and divests the style of all inherent quali

he sometimes writes himself in French. He is the
the venerated centre of a group of initiated follow
influence makes itself felt indirectly, but so great is its ra
force, that democratic England of the nineteenth
bears its recognizable stamp, and it can be traced
abroad.

Beside this austere but benignant sage, Malthus[1]
as the unbending, almost fanatical apostle. Some
associate with his name the merit, and many oth
odium, of having unflinchingly proclaimed the cruel t
the 'principle of population' His intellectual passion
exact science of human development conceals a gener
feeling, a soul that is essentially normal and sound,
general public views moral matters in the simplest o
and from now onwards begins the legend of the un
aridness of utilitarian thinkers In an age of Roman
Malthus represents the resolute objectivity of mind, a
submission to the physical conditions of existence,
contradicts both the unlimited hopes of the prop
reason, such as Godwin, and the inspired flights of

with the enthusiasts of fraternal love, such as Shelley. He is indeed at the opposite pole of psychological life. . . .

Ricardo[1] shares with Malthus the admiration or aversion of the multitude; he gives liberal economy its most doctrinal form, and lays stress upon the irreconcilable conflict between a science which studies the mutual compensation of egoisms, and the emotions associated by simple-minded or sentimental beings with the theme of an improvement in the common lot. As a financier, he directs the reckoning up of opposing forces towards the abstract rigour of a kind of social mathematics. He is responsible for the classical theory of rent; and socialism will borrow from him the thesis of the 'iron law' which controls wages. His book, tense, full, and difficult to read, was for a long time the highest authority in its field.

James Mill[2] bridges the gap between the pure theorists and the men of action. Of a vigorous creative intellect, he takes up again the theses of Bentham and Ricardo, leaving the mark of his personality upon them. A psychologist, a moralist, and an economist, he conceives on broad lines and under all its aspects the problem of the political reorganization of England; and through the forceful influence which he exercises upon friends or disciples, he transforms utilitarianism into an active doctrine. Around him are grouped the 'philosophical radicals.' No one better represents the effort made by English thought, in these opening years of the nineteenth century, to reduce the irrational element in the life of the individual or of the nation.

Utilitarianism is the name applied to the ideas of these men, in their whole range; but the ethics of utility are only a part of the system, and not indeed the main part. The latter themselves derive from the extension to problems of conduct, as to all others, of a method borrowed from mathematics and physics. The desire and the hope of making the various provinces of reality one, through a common mode of explanation, would of course rise in minds that were wholly won over by the prestige of mechanical solutions. Intelligence being

[1] David Ricardo, 1772–1823, son of a Jewish broker of Dutch origin, himself a broker, then a property owner in the country and member of Parliament; *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, 1817.

[2] James Mill, 1773–1836, born in Scotland, son of a shoemaker, had in view a church career, then settled in London (1802) and lived by his pen, or by the functions with which the East India Company entrusted him. *History of British India*, 1817–18; *Elements of Political Economy*, 1821; *Analysis of the Human Mind*, 1829. See biography by Bain, 1882; and the *Autobiography* by his son John Stuart Mill. For the latter, see below, Book VI, Chap. II.

ble to conceive of a more perfect or more legitimate device, rder to embrace the whole universe of mind, than to ve it into the simple elements of the physical world, the

et of its success. It represents the first thoroughgoing ication of physics to the world of consciousness. Through l the operations of mind have been reduced to various com- tions of sensations and images. The transition from this chology of association to the ethics of utility is easy and

'computation of pleasures' is therefore a legitimate nula: it is indeed a question of arithmetical values. What the advantage of others comes as a pure source of enjoy- t to souls of natural generosity; and thus altruism is an come of egoism.

he laws governing social life will be deduced in an equally way from one single principle. Priestley and Beccaria e provided Bentham with a maxim so obvious in itself and

lish political empiricism, will have to submit to a daring me of reform, which, without losing the sense of what is sible, will know how to will and how to dare The

any one member, the greatest possible amount
springs from the free choice made by individua
from a division of labour carried to its furthest lim
from the effective functioning of a sort of automat
—the law of supply and demand—which always
duction towards the most necessary objects. Co
therefore the deep incentive to progress, and the e
of his own interests is the best way for a citizen
community. Meanwhile the possession of lands
fertility gives rise to a supplementary benefit cal
the profit of privileged owners, and in comparis
income from the land which only brings in wha
expended upon it; in this way capital is formed, an
come into being—some of them reaping a reward
ownership, and others *from their labour*; a more ju
tion of wealth cannot be imagined. The wage-
compete among themselves in the labour market
salary will tend towards the limit compatible with
tenance of life. Finally, with population in
geometrical, and foodstuffs in arithmetical ratio
crowded earth would in one century be the scene
atrocious famine, if disease, poverty, and war, a
operation with deliberate foresight, did not, r
generations of mankind. Ricardo and Maltl
economy with the character of an austere and sto
which is beneficial because it has the courage to s
inexorable conditions of physical and social life.

These doctrines have a very wide and deep influe
prepare the measures of a thought-out adaptati
which the Victorian order of things is gradually o
a more modern spirit, and on the basis of a relative
The Radicals of 1820 are unable to put their
entirely into practice, and they obtain only a part
tion; the Chartists of 1848 will take up their for
struggle in vain to impose them. But the former
less, set up a trend of progress which gradually
impulse in the course of the century, and which es
the very core of the Victorian equilibrium a secre
movement. From 1820 to 1835 their influence betr
striking results, which stand out as landmarks in t
development of England: the cancelling of the la
the workers' combinations (1824), the legal eman
Catholics (1829), the foundation of London Univer

the first extension of the electoral franchise (1832), a reform in municipal administration (1834), the humanizing of the penal code. These measures are passed through Parliament

James Mill.

3. *Sydney Smith; the Reviews.*—The whole country, how-

He is an educated man, of intellectual tastes; a cleric, he preaches, and treats of philosophy and morality with a measure of success. But the doctrinaire element is already wanting in his personality. We find in him the political instincts of the Whig tradition taking more definite shape and becoming more intensified; yet he remains a Whig, in all that the word implies: an essential moderation, a concrete grasp of problems, an individualistic liberalism.

Within these limits his clear understanding can work all the more surely. *Peter Plymley's Letters* are a model of skilful

to the common sense and sympathy of the reader. Religious intolerance, the author says, is a survival from another age. Let us rid ourselves of all antiquated mistrust and hatred; the Catholics, the Irish are entitled to the freedom enjoyed by all; the very principles of Protestantism forbid that one should withold this from them. And justice, he points out, will be the most able policy in unsettled times. For nations as for individuals, prudence is the best assurance of success This defence becomes at times animated and spirited, but most often is controlled and displays an arch humour and a realistic

[1] Sydney Smith, 1771–1845, Anglican clergyman, was connected with the

verve. It is the art of Swift, tempered and less strainec without the harsh vigour of a unique genius. Thus presented there was a chance of success for the cause of which th utilitarians were the abstract defenders.

The great reviews of the modern type come into being a the same time, and henceforth play a conspicuous part in th moulding of literary opinion, while they exercise a politica influence that is scarcely less important. Their effort, as whole, has behind it one fixed and common idea: to satisf the tastes of a cultured public, which is ever broadening; an to offer it, without causing its interest to flag or runnin counter to its prejudices, the mental stimulus required t give further definiteness and strength to its beliefs. Her we have a kind of intermediary degree between an independen polemic literature and the press of to-day, which is too ofte incapable of any free reaction and which has to cater for it readers. British reviews have a doctrine, a general attitude and support a party; but their anonymous articles leave margin of liberty to their contributors: the authority the have acquired permits them to claim and possess a right o initiative, a moral autonomy; the personalities of editors, wh are known to the public, add the final note to their individua characters; each represents at once a group of interests, collective organ, and a single voice, to which the public give ear, and which informs, instructs, advises, and reprimand its audience.

These regular and permanent publications, while organizin opinion, provide writers with new facilities for essaying thei talent, without running the risks, or incurring the expense, o publishing under their own names.

Originally, the reviews are organs of strife. Each has it own features. The *Edinburgh Review*, the first to be founded, upholds the Liberal cause, has philosophic pretensions, bu remains true to the Whig spirit. Its daring effort, wholl relative as it is, brings a rival into the field, the *Quarterl Review*,[2] which is out to defend the traditional orthodoxies Opposed in politics, these two periodicals agree in condemnin Lakist innovations in poetry; their doctrine is authoritative their tone dogmatic; and the *Edinburgh* is not less violent i its defence of the sound principles of style, than the *Quarterl*

[1] In 1802 by Jeffrey, Sydney Smith, Brougham; a quarterly, its sales reache a total of nearly 14,000 copies in 1818.

[2] Founded, in 1809, in London, by Walter Scott, with the help of Cannin Ellis, Croker, Gifford; it reached the same sale as the *Edinburgh Review*.

in denouncing the enemies of Church and State. *Blackwood's Magazine*[1] engages in a still more vigorous offensive against the adversaries of order in art and society; and the *London Magazine* having opened its columns freely to the Reformers, the editor of *Blackwood's* challenges and kills, in a duel, the editor of the *London*. . . . This is the climax of the struggle; polemical writing, from now onwards, without being less spirited, has less murderous results. By means of the *Westminster Review*,[2] the philosophical Radicals are able [illegible]

4 *Cobbett*.—Cobbett[3] is a figure apart in the literary and political movement of his time. He is not a popularizer, but an ingenuous adept, an inventor after his fashion. His opinions are purely instinctive; he has no well-thought-out [illegible]

understand its duties.

[illegible]

His work explains how for a time the action of the utilit
philosophers was able to harmonize with the national tem
ment, and find an indirect support in the country people.
agricultural crisis, which from now onwards is a chronic
causes deep unrest among the rural classes; and to this Col
lends a voice that is popular and even vulgar, but end
with a natural eloquence. Naïvely preoccupied with him
he possesses all the charm of candid self-revelation.
spontaneous prose, incapable of any logic or refinement
wholesome and full of life, he narrates his journeys a
England (*Rural Rides*), and with a kind of simple p
felicity succeeds in calling up landscapes, as he depicts
manners of the people. His language is expressive,
even after a century has lost nothing of its freshness

To be consulted: Albee, *History of English Utilitarianism*, 1902; *Cam
History of English Literature*, vol. xi, Chaps. II, III; vol. xii, Chap
Chevrillon, *Sydney Smith, etc.*, 1894; Elton, *Survey of English Liter
1780-1830*, 1920; E. Halévy, *La Formation du Radicalisme philosophique*, 19
idem, *Histoire du peuple anglais au XIXe siècle*, vols. i, ii, 1913-23; L. Ste
The English Utilitarians, 1900; idem, *Hours in a Library*, vol. iii, new ed
1907.

CHAPTER IV

THE SECOND GENERATION OF POETS

ight perchance have been to them, at least for a time, a lected and common sojourn, a Lake district. . . .

Without actually constituting a school, these writers offer many points of close resemblance that one cannot but view em together. The represent, indeed, a poetic generation—e second in Romanticism. And just as they coalesce to-ther, they belong to a broader background of facts. Their ity is consolidated and confirmed in an intellectual and cial movement. Born as they were, either, like Byron, just

rtain spheres, not less passionately embraced, are every-ere rife, and could not possibly have left them untouched.

beral agitation after 1815, the progress of utilitarian ilosophy, the continuing state of political unrest in Europe ter twenty-five years of upheaval, and the preparation for at was to be the ordered era of the Victorians by way of unrest which would appear destructive of order—such are e most apparent influences through which this new period vours the adhesion of young and ardent minds to the cause *progress And at a first glance nothing seems more*

paradoxical than this hidden relationship which links up to speak, the democratic idealism of Shelley, the aristocr individualism of Byron, and a state of social uncertainty, most powerful cause of which is the secretly aggressive ac of a middle class with a predominantly realistic outlook.

From the psychological point of view, which here aga the most significant, the second generation of poets also s out against a background of relative complicity between age and themselves. They mark the extreme degree rea by a phase of the moral rhythm; and they do not overste formula of this phase, even if they carry it to its limits. particular intensity which the character of the period ass in their pages even lends these writers a typical value, m their work in a sense representative. An inner need pro the new literature to give free scope to all its possible ef While already there is evidence of the corrective instinc searching after balance, the cycle opened up by the de victory of sentiment has not yet been traversed in its ent The exaltation of the faculty of feeling and imagir quickly subsided in the case of the Lake poets, being reco with the respect for an essential orthodoxy which re- lished, even within the soul itself, the limits and restr forces of prudence and faith. The logic of a revolt of p against reason has of necessity to lead it still further. unlimited independence is expressed in diverse ways, th the free and rebellious element to be found in Byron's ur cynicism, in Shelley's ecstatic and humanitarian pant as well as in the sensualism of Keats. Herein lies the g a moral anarchy, the full daring of which will hardly be until the close of the century. The new Romanticism will come to disturb the closing years of the Victorian e be the dauntless heir of that which had preceded it.

This liberation of the individual as regards all rules, emotion as regards a wisdom necessary to sound livin deed a not uncommon tendency in other writers besides Keats, and Shelley. One may say that with several contemporaries there is outlined an insurrection of re instincts; and that an after-taste of decadence permea a perceptible savour the literary efforts, the aspiratic the favourite moods of certain groups or circles. The of the Romanticism of terror with Maturin [1] is distin by a conspicuous liberty towards the susceptibil

[1] See above, Chap. II, sect. 2.

conscience. That attitude in Byron which has called for the name of 'Satanism' answers to a peculiar fashion, and finds its imitators. The members of the 'Cockney school,' apart from Keats, profess some disdain for the conventionality with which Puritanism veils all that touches upon love; the erotic theme, with Leigh Hunt and his friends, is treated with a readiness suggestive of a certain defiance, and is related to [illegible]

heart of this age there stirs an inclination to revolt against [illegible]

from Oxford for having written a tract on the 'necessity of atheism'; even Byron prefers to voice his views in ironical language and by allusion. On the whole, the psychic revolt, [illegible]

hesitation would point to the persistence of many repressions.

It could not be otherwise, if one takes into account the tone of the epoch. For, everything considered, England about 1820 is anything but revolutionary. While at this moment there are signs of a convergence between outstanding individuals and the average person of culture, such symptoms must not be exaggerated. Writers are already accentuating in a marked manner the claims of ordinary sensibilities, and this, no doubt, is an habitual fact; but among these writers themselves, the majority remain very far short of the bold and successful ventures which are the privilege of a few geniuses. Never has a group of very great poets been so [illegible]

[1] For the group as a whole, see below, Chap. V.

[2] There is much of the same spirit in Beddoes, and a little in Darley, Hood etc., at a slightly later date. See below, Book vi, Chap. IV, sect 3

the most accessible of these three poets to foreign readers; was the first to influence Europe, and had the widest acti upon literature. He it is who best represents in Engl literature the *mal du siècle*, probably the most common featu of international Romanticism. The will to health, the mo success of the Lake poets, to which Coleridge is only a relati exception, are here replaced by an unconcealed disease, t source of suffering and a motive for pride, which cannot, a indeed will not, be cured. A deep analogy thus affilia Byron with the spiritual posterity of Rousseau—with i Goethe of *Werther*, the Chateaubriand of *René*—making him his turn one of the most active generators of a mental contagi that is freely spreading beyond the frontiers of nations.

Herein lies the dominant trait of his features. At the ve

sincerity that is very real and whole-hearted, hence errors a

political collaboration with Leigh Hunt (*The Liberal*, 1822–3). After

pride, still more fiercely than that of Chateaubriand, cherished within itself.[1]

His divided nature, however, regained its self-mastery in creative activities. Art was for Byron the full and true life through which all his tendencies could work together in easy unity. The last demonstration of his haughty courage, and the circumstances of his death, show him also fully active, sure of himself, and reconciled with his conscience. And all the moral unrest of his stormy career cannot dim the splendour of a personality so admirably vigorous and richly endowed. Now that he appears in his true perspective, and when one has ceased to admire or disparage out of mere obedience to fashion, one sees more clearly that in himself, and in his marvellous gifts, there is the material that will resist the wear of time.

His literary personality was no less complicated. His instincts were fundamentally classical, in the sense that he did not conceive of fitness in form without an adequate precision, and sacrificed nothing to suggestion. He was deeply influenced by the ancients, and still more by Pope and his school; he never repudiated this culture; on the contrary, he always proclaimed his indebtedness to it, setting it up in opposition to the new and tentative efforts of a Wordsworth or a Southey, on which he passed a very severe judgment. His first poems have a quality of rhythm and language which betrays at every turn the disciple of the eighteenth century; it is but barely that an original temperament, hungering for emotion, and bent upon dramatizing life, can be discerned in them. When a wounded pride brought him self-revelation, *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* made an impression through the harsh force of a satire modelled on *The Dunciad*, and in which the most ill-treated poets are the Lakists. Such remained his conscious tastes; and if in the end he felt the magnetism of a Shelley, he never believed that he himself broke away from tradition. A democrat through spite as well as generosity, but an aristocrat at heart, he despised Wordsworth's peasant prosaism, and what he regarded as the vulgarity of Keats. Among his contemporaries, he praised most highly the writers of a semi-conservative style, such as a Campbell or a Rogers. These were not mere superficial judgments; his entire nature is here involved; his career closes

[1] The publication of *Lord Byron's Correspondence, chiefly with Lady Melbourne, etc.*, 1922, seems to have practically settled the matter.

in a satirical realism, developed with a lucid perfection of form that is akin to the classical ideal. But a powerful Romanticism of the sensibility very quickly carries his art into wild, adventurous domains, where it little avails him to continue the cult of his masters, or apply their lessons: for his poetry is made new by the irresistible outpouring of a wholly personal inspiration.

Not that he was much of an innovator in language or metre. He was never capable of shaping for his own use a faultless verbal instrument; to the very end, his style had its dross, its traces of automatism and affectation, its evidence of carelessness. His attempt at the archaic manner was not a successful venture in *Childe Harold*; rhetoric and abstraction are never far removed from his moral reflections. He has rather been a happy imitator than a creator of rhythms; he handles the short line of Scott, the Spenserian stanza, blank verse, with honourable success; it is the *ottava rima* of *Beppo* and *Don Juan*, the swift and mocking stanza that so effectively carries and sets off an insolent manner, which most clearly bears his personal stamp. But he is a great writer by virtue of his energy of expression. At times it is a massive energy, compact, loaded to the full with sensations evocative of realities or of primary emotions, rather than of delicate shades or dreams, unparalleled for the power of shock it can communicate to words, but at the same time not incapable of interpreting the splendour or grace of a landscape; at other times a more disciplined force, which restrains itself, and only spends and reveals itself in the pliable firmness with which an ironical design is sustained, developed, and given precision in terms at once appropriate, effective, and graphic. The Romanticist is better seen in the first range of effects, the classicist in the second; in his best style Byron tends to make these two aspects converge and amalgamate in a simplicity, vehement or sly, but always forceful.

His work is more varied than the simplified picture of his genius, retained in the memory of the general public, would suggest. *Childe Harold* and the tales of the type of *The Giaour* may be regarded as a group, the best known, and the most actively influential in England and abroad. Here we have the development of the specially Byronic theme of a melancholy that is disenchanted and associated with all the vanity of human endeavour, as with the beauties of nature; whether the scenic setting be taken from actual places, or from an east

which the imagination is pleased to leave vague; whether history provides the plots, or fiction invents them. The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* attempt to link up this theme with the contemporary vogue of the medieval past; but Byron's pilgrim knight is only a pretext; the last two cantos, with their more solid thought, a riper pathos and surer art, end by forgetting the existence of the said knight. From now onwards the poet imparts more life to his heroes, because he gives them more sincerely his own; the collection of these ill-fated and gloomy figures, which embody his Romantic feeling of himself, acquires a greater relief in his last portraits; the Manfred and the Cain of Byron represent not only the destiny of an individual stricken with remorse, but doubt, revolt, pessimism, all the impassioned negations or interrogations which constitute the philosophy of the *mal du siècle*. But here the tale in verse gives place to the drama and the mystery play.

attitude or doctrine involves. But if *Childe Harold* is now no more than a series of episodes, these at least often possess a striking vigour; the oratorical movement in the narrative turns

fused in

a sorrow-

in its m

borders on a mystic communion. In Byron we have a pantheism, very different from that of his contemporaries; the universe for him is a mysterious power, and an accomplice, looking benignly upon rebellious spirits because it ignores human orthodoxies; a help to souls in torment because it appeases them, and fortifies in them the bitterly strong feeling they have of themselves.

The Venetian tragedies, and *Sardanapalus*, are comparatively regular, and fairly classical in spirit; they suggest the influence of Alfieri. Despite their estimable merits, it is elsewhere that Byron displays the full dramatic force of his genius; on quite another scale are *Manfred* and *Cain*, where the action oversteps both reality and history to enter into the place of philosophical symbolism, and where the true drama sets the modern conscience and thought against traditional faith. Such was the judgment of Goethe, who allocated a place to the author of *Manfred* among the allegorical personages of the second part of *Faust*.[1]

In the last group of poems another Byron is shown. The doctrine of life is here the same, but is expressed in the lighter or corrosive tone of irony, and not in that of pathos. The insolence which from the first had accompanied in an undertone the direct appeal to the reader's sympathy, now becomes dominant; inversely, the satire is at times interrupted in order to allow the tragic or idyllic moods to reappear. Steeped as he was in the literary atmosphere of Italy, Byron had drawn his inspiration from noble memories when he wrote *The Prophecy of Dante*, *The Lament of Tasso*; another element of this atmosphere, however, the sceptical gaiety of a society as witty as it is free from all restraint, was acting upon him in a contrary direction. At all times favourable to mock-heroic themes, Italian literature had very definite models to offer in the works of burlesque writers, from Pulci to Casti. After having tried his verve in *Beppo*, Byron gave full and much more ample vent to it in *Don Juan*.

As though a part of his temperament felt the strain of the moving intensity which he had sought so long, he henceforth turns to parody his former attitude; *Don Juan* is an ironic replica of the very subject of *Childe Harold*. The new hero is hardly more substantial; and the sequence of events is quite as boldly made dependent on the poet's fancy. Of unequal merit, and in places dragging, but full of varied resources, the tale carries us to the most diverse parts of Europe, as to the extremities of fortune. The spirit which animates it is that of disabused experience, and of Voltaire's *Candide*; the literary practices of the eighteenth century are praised on every occasion; but not to mention the outbursts of passion or lyricism, there is here in the satire of society and manners a bitterness which implies that the heart is giving itself away.

[1] See Brandl, 'Goethe's Verhältniss zu Byron' (*Goethe-Jahrbuch*, vol. xx, 1899).

The note of inner Romanticism is unmistakable. The work abounds in brilliant pictures and witty digressions; the jocular vein, in turn harsh, comic, and by choice unexpected, has in it something reminiscent of Swift and Sterne; the whole savours, nevertheless, of undeniable originality. The choice of scenes, the philosophy of events, and the irreverent wisdom of

system
sincere
all the
epeated
hich he
which

he had threatened with scandal.

Something of all these successive and in no way contradictory attitudes went to the making of 'Byronism': their common essence. . . . According to the moment, and the nature of the person, such or such an element prevailed; [1] the ardent and the tragic poet alone had an appeal for Lamartine, whilst Musset, above all, delighted in the blasé master of mockery. Under one form or another, the wave of influence emanating from Byron was mingled with the current of French Romanticism itself.

3. *Shelley*.—Of a shorter span than that of Byron, and concentrated within some ten years, Shelley's poetical career [2]

[1] For France see Estève, *Byron et le romantisme français*, 1907; for the influence of 'Byronism' in Europe, etc., see a bibliographical summary in Elton, *A Survey of English Literature, 1780–1830*, vol. ii, pp. 419–20

permits, however, of being divided up into stages; it is possible and instructive to follow its development. But a study of this kind would demand minute detail. A summary appreciation must here examine it as a whole.

Shelley's life was one of passionate devotion to intellect, and this ardour explains how his ideas were transmuted into poetry. However, this intellectual stamp is too strongly marked upon him for one to neglect the doctrine which he embraced, and to which he gave himself with a true and deep zeal. Here again, one can witness a process of change, a progress in many-sidedness and in flexibility; but one perceives no serious deviation, and unity predominates. Shelley was taught by experience, without being forced to disavow his principles. His early death makes it hardly possible to settle the question; he seems, however, to have belonged to that rare species of mankind whom reason and feeling convert into revolutionaries in the flush of youth, and who remain so for the rest of their lives.

The work of feeling this was, as much as that of reason. Of a sensitive, highly strung nature, Shelley was stirred at an early age by the spirit of revolt; from a boy's miseries he reaped a sense of cruelty and injustice; the fever of adolescence, an already mystical intuition of what true faith could and should be, the contagious influence of French ideas then in the air, made of him from his university days one of those pure believers who are chilled by the semi-sceptical coldness of orthodoxy, and who give their own burning zeal the name of irreligion. Godwin then provided him with a system; he took it, made it his own, and scarcely perceived that he was gradually altering its very essence. The doctrine of 'necessity,' or absolute determinism, now became a pro-

Hutchinson, 1907; *Poems*, ed. by Locock, 1911; ed. by Koszul (Everyman's Library); *Lyrical Poems*, etc., *Dramatic Poems*, ed. by Herford, 1917–22; *Literary and Philosophical Criticism*, ed. by Shawcross, 1911; *Letters*, ed. by Ingpen, 1912; *Complete Works*, ed. by R. Ingpen and W. E. Peck, 1927, etc. See biographies by Medwin (ed. by Forman, 1913); Hogg (ed. by Dowden, 1906); Sharp, 1887; Dowden, 1896; information [illegible] (*Recollections*, etc., ed. by Dowden, 1906; *Records, etc.*, 1878); [illegible] *anglaises*, 1901; Kroder, 1903 (on metre); Ack[illegible] son, 1909; Clutton-Brock, 1910; Koszul, *La* [illegible] 1913; Osborn, 1919; Strong, 1921; M. L. G. de [illegible] O. W. Campbell, *Shelley and the Unromantic*[illegible] *his Life and Work*, 1926; M. T. Solve, *Shelley, his Theory of Poetry*, 1927; F. Stovall, *Desire and Restraint in Shelley*, 1932; Grabo, *A Newton among Poets*, 1930; Kurtz, *The Pursuit of Death, etc.*, 1933; Peyre, *Shelley en France*, 1936; L. Cazamian, *Prométhée délivré* (*trad. et introd. critique*), 1942.

fession of warm hope in the moral liberty of a will addicted to goodness; anarchical individualism inclined more definitely towards a humanitarian brotherhood and the authority of the wise; nugatory rationalism became transformed into a desperate affirmation of intuitive truths, and atheistic materialism developed into an idealistic pantheism.

Diverse tendencies had coexisted in Godwin himself; by

being found an echoing response, and it is the cause which he never ceased to serve. Whatever the judgments one may pass on certain of his acts, one is forced to recognize in this unshaken devotion of both mind and conduct the courage and sincerity of his moral life.

His work must be organized round this central desire for theoretical expression. Several groups correspond to unequal degrees of doctrinal tension or of dominant intellectuality. There are the writings in which demonstration is the chief feature, whether their very structure is by far too didactic in character, or whether the art which clothes the thesis with imagery, emotional colouring, or a symbolical atmosphere is unable to acquire full independence The first two great

while they

freely; one

uch are in

themselves aggressive and polemical goes to destroy the serenity of taste, and paralyses it in its choice of the elements of beauty. It is not actually on account of their doctrine

quality of the effort which lends it imaginative expression. They are, however, far from being devoid of significance. Quite different is the case with the prose writings, in which the importance of form is very substantially reduced, while the thought can in all legitimacy present itself with no decorative vestment of words The essays of Shelley are not

and one of them, *A Defence of Poetry*, in a tone of eloquence that is still demonstrative, unites the pressing rigour of reasoning with the strong and infectious vehemence of passion.

In another class of poems the same enthusiasm of thought is expressed, but effectively incorporated either with visions and symbols, or with a definite emotion and a concrete theme. Here it is that Shelley shows himself a master of philosophical, political, and elegiac poetry. In *Alastor* this perfect balance is attempted, but not with genuine success; an over-exuberant imagination pours itself forth and covers up the inner purpose of the work almost to the point of concealment. In at best a hardly coherent outline is traced the figurative destiny of a noble, restless soul whom the witchery of solitude attracts and destroys, while meaner creatures are encouraged and fortified in their weakness by mutual support. The *Moïse* of Vigny develops a somewhat analogous theme. Shelley is nowhere so purely a Romanticist; the ardour and anguish of a vague desire, the splendour of the universe, and the secret languor mingled with the ecstasies which nature pours out, have never been more vividly expressed. *Prometheus Unbound* is the richest and most beautiful fusion of the doctrine with a suggestive complex of emotions and images. By altering the ancient Greek myth, and infusing it with a wholly modern thought, the poet draws from it the magnificent illustration of the victory which the genius of man pursues even through suffering, and which he will win over the powers of evil by virtue of the force of love. The setting of this cosmic drama, its actors, its incidents, the pains and the joys of a world oppressed by the tyranny of heaven and restored to its primal purity by a supreme act of liberation, all bear the touch of a sovereign grandeur, of a pathos vast in its scope, of a bright or graceful magic, without either the contours of the symbol or the more spiritual features of the idea losing their vigorous note. Of kindred quality are the elegy where, in the person of Keats, Shelley weeps over but above all exalts the sacred victims of immortal idealism (*Adonais*); and the touching evocation of the sure triumph of Hellenic independence (*Hellas*). To this group of masterpieces should be added the political satires, where the doctrinal zeal of the writer is curbed to a more concrete exposition, while the disciplined emotion allows of an art, the more firm for its soberness, as in *The Masque of Anarchy*.

emotion, and music; what it suggests to the intelligence is an element of its own prestige, a further note in its inner resonance, not its main motive and source. And here we have the vast domain of lyricism, in which Shelley reigns supreme First there are some longer poems, where the composition, however free its flow, obeys a fixed plan, in which the logical mind has still its part: *The Witch of Atlas*, the capricious play of an enchanted imagination, which under the enthralling and fleeting succession of forms probably pursues the ever active spirit that animates nature; *The Triumph of Life*, where according to some obscure scheme, which the poem, if completed, would have made clearer, the pageant of life emerges and passes before our eyes, spreading along its track the illusion of a distinct existence; *Epipsychidion*, that effusion

in the images and melodies which can make us realize and share it; or more or less connected with a whole, such as the choruses and songs of *Hellas* and *Prometheus*.

Shelley's lyricism is incomparable. In no other do we find the perfect sureness, the triumphant rapidity of this upward

There subsists an energy, if not always a virility, in this somewhat enervating atmosphere, where the fibres of inner being are strung almost to breaking point; the tone of Shelley's poetry is not that of a voluptuous sensuality, but of a keen aspiration, in which mystical desire, with its anguished pangs and spiritual raptures, transcends the joys and sufferings of ordinary mankind. The unattainable aim of these efforts is the impossible return of individual life to the whole, with which the poet's thrilling intuition seizes his essential kinship. Pantheism is here a living faith, ardently realized through direct knowledge, at the same time as it is conceived by reason. A divine immanence sheds its rays throughout the universe, illuminating from within the heaviest masses of matter; everything is light, just as everything is life; but at the very core of things Shelley's idealism puts love, and Plato is equally his master with Spinoza. No philosophy makes either more easy or more true that intimate fusion of nature and mind which is actually the method of modern lyricism.

In this way have been created the wondrous myths and the cosmic schemes in which the elements, the planets, and, on a less superhuman scale, the clouds and the west wind, become quickened with their individual existence, and speak a language that we can understand; in this way are rendered possible the minute wonders of imaginative sympathy, which can evoke a whole silent drama in the flowering corner of some deserted garden, or express the rapturous song of the lark, the numb happy consciousness of the glow-worm. But in spite of this infinite diffusion of its soul, the most taking notes of Shelley's lyricism are those where, mingling with the serene choir of all nature, we hear, the human lament of one who foresees and remembers, limited in his strength and even in his love, mourning for those ecstasies that are too rare, for the fleeting apparitions of 'intellectual beauty' and 'the spirit of delight.'

Whatever the voice which speaks to us, Shelley has the gift of lending it the sweetest and most liquid harmonies, not the most sonorous and sensual, but pure in their vehement intensity. A delicious sadness emanates from this blending of notes, now high and now low, but always in a minor key; and the song they compose is the very utterance of the wounded sensibility which the divorce of action and a too lofty desire has given not only to Romanticism, but to the modern age. The flowing ease with which the words merge into one another,

as spontaneous as the other, naturally formed but one music. He has experimented with all rhythms; the suppleness and variety of his prosody are extraordinary; the Spenserian stanza of *Adonais*, the *terza rima* of *The Triumph of Life*, the metrical combinations of *Prometheus*, are the variations of a master upon accepted themes, or the inventions of an original genius. Even when the form testifies to the poet's negligence, and as it were to his impatience, when it lacks the finish only to be acquired from an industrious art, it retains the felicity of inspired expression; and that language and that measure, so individual, through their characteristic turn, their liquid but ever undulating flow, which is a continual creation, and not the forced adaptation of a rhythmic utterance to a preconceived framework, convey to us the poignant impression of contact with the innermost pulsations of the artist's heart.

There are yet other sides to Shelley's art. By a true miracle, this lyric poet, so essentially personal, succeeded in writing a great drama. Or rather, this escape from self which the intuitive penetration of other lives involves made it possible for him, by attaching himself to them, penetrating into their recesses, and developing them for their own sakes, to attain without effort to the objectivity of drama. *The Cenci* is a tragedy of sombre pathos, where the fascination of crime and the energy of heroic innocence are thrown into relief with a vigour, and frequently also with a sobriety, which, while recalling the exuberance of the Elizabethans, do not allow any slackening c[illegible]
concentrate[illegible]
developmen[illegible]
Charles I.[1] There was also a capacity for escaping the

wearing intensity of lyricism, or the tension of philosophical zeal, by way of the familiar playfulness, the free expansion of a personal self which yet is determined and able to keep its deeper secrets inviolate; and these epistles, these conversations in verse, have a particular charm of their own, just as they possess a special quality of language. The relaxing of inspiration leads Shelley back from his customary and indeed sincere vein, a Romantic one, to a plane of his moral being which is no doubt more superficial, but where is revealed the classical gift of exactness joined to simplicity in style (*Rosalind and Helen*, *Julian and Maddalo*, etc.).

He remains, above all, a lyric poet, the greatest that England or perhaps modern Europe has produced. His influence, in the beginning, was confined to an *élite*; Browning and Tennyson came strongly under his spell; since then, it has spread, and become a great force in literature, extending to foreign countries, where through certain affinities it has found a way to some talented writers; the French symbolists were not unacquainted with Shelley's work. He is, however, easily accessible only to such minds as are independent, sensitive, and subtle, and capable of rediscovering in themselves something of the freshness and wonder of primitive man.

4. *Keats*.—The figure and the work of Keats[1] bear the

---

owe much to the talent of eminent actors, Kemble and Macready. From now onwards, and for the space of two generations, the most genuine dramatic inspiration is to be found in the inquiries of pure psychology, in the ideal oppositions of character: 'Imaginary Conversations' of Landor (see below, Chap. V), 'Monologues' of Browning (see Book VI, Chap. IV), etc. The revival of the theatre at the end of the nineteenth century will be brought about by the re-established contact between the stage with its concrete exigencies, and the moral passions of the times, under the form permitted by the 'problem play,' and the social drama.

[1] John Keats, born in London, in 1795, came of a family of modest condition; an orphan at 15 years of age, he was first intended for a medical career, but gave himself up entirely to poetry. With no encouragement save the friendship of Leigh Hunt, of Haydon, the painter, etc., he published in 1817 a volume of *Poems*; in 1818, *Endymion: A Poetic Romance*; in 1820, *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems* (a second version of one of these, *Hyperion*, appeared in 1856). The critics in general were either indifferent or hostile to Keats; but if he suffered from this injustice, it did not, as has been said, cause his death. The year 1819, when he wrote his great *Odes*, was the culminating point in his brief career. Attacked by consumption, he vainly sought health in Italy, and died in Rome in 1821. His last months were darkened by a hopeless love. *Complete Works*, ed. by H. Buxton Forman, 1901; *Poetical Works*, ed. by H. B. Forman, 1908; ed. by de Sélincourt, 1912; ed. by Colvin, 1915; ed. by J. M. Murry, 1931; *Odes, Lyrics, and Sonnets*, ed. by Hills, 1916; *Selected Poems*, ed. by Symons, 1907; *Letters*, ed. by Maurice B. Forman, 1931; *Letters, Papers, etc.*, ed. by Williamson, 1914. See biographies and studies by Lord Houghton, new edition, 1906; Colvin (English Men of Letters), 1885;

mark of a miraculous youth, cut short by death just when it had attained a precocious maturity; he lived a little longer

significance beside the originality, the vigour of a temperament of unequalled gifts.

In a social circle where nothing seemed to herald such a growth, and which, if it did not actually stifle it, afforded it only a very meagre support; without the high culture of a university, but with the lessons of a teacher and friend alike, there developed an ardent vocation, a passionate love for beauty. An instinctive desire first and foremost, implanted in a nature that is highly sensual. But the aestheticism of Keats has also an intellectual side. No one has ever reaped

genius. He read the writers of the Renascence, loved and cultivated Spenser, Chapman, Fletcher, Milton. How closely the cult of Shakespeare was interwoven with the tenor of his thought can be seen from his private letters. Wordsworth he admired most of all among his contemporary writers, although the closest influence was that of Leigh Hunt, to

shape at an early age, in the adoration of the beautiful. But this adoration he elaborates into a doctrine: Beauty is the

1925), H. W. Garrod (*John Keats*, 1926)

supreme Truth; it is imagination that discovers it, and scientific reasoning, armed as it is to analyse and dissect, is an altogether inferior instrument of knowledge. This idealism, probably encouraged by the teaching of Coleridge, easily assumes a note of mysticism; one can see a sustained allegory in *Endymion*; and certain passages are most surely possessed of a symbolical value. On the other hand, the religion of beauty is here more pagan, more free than it will be with Ruskin and his disciples; although it has not the character of absolute indifference with regard to moral principles which aestheticism will show towards the end of the century. Despite certain traces of commonness which his work has almost entirely eliminated, there is in Keats a delicacy of the senses as of feeling; there is even a diffuse puritanism, to which his early environment had unconsciously accustomed him, and which his relations with the circle of Leigh Hunt had weakened but not destroyed. An inherent generosity, a nobility of soul to which his life as well as his work bears testimony, finally decide his career as a writer: he will have a mission to perform, a duty to fulfil. His social and religious ideas are critical and independent; on the whole, this dreamer, this pure artist, was in spiritual sympathy with the Radicals of his day. But he consecrated his endeavours to a positive task; his intention was to serve, through the medium of poetry, the cause of a moral progress in which he believed. The pessimism and the voluptuous irresponsibility which often emanate from his lines must not hide from us his genuine adhesion to the notion—almost universally accepted at that time in England—of a priesthood in literature.

It would, however, be paradoxical to lay the main emphasis upon these conscious desires of the poet. There is in the culture of Keats a deficiency, resulting from his incomplete education; he explored the world of ideas by the aid of a keen intellectual curiosity, an upright judgment, but also with a slight inexperience. No doubt his maturity would have given definite shape to the intentions of his early years; they remain, as we know them, somewhat vague and shifting. Despite the sincerity of his effort, his doctrine is neither very coherent nor very original. To insist too much upon it is to be unjust to his work; indeed it is not through it that his poetry will live.

Keats is pre-eminently a man of sensations, with whom the very activities of intelligence bring into play concrete notions, images, and qualities. Thanks to a principle of choice with

the same time of over-refinement, of profusion, of the strain of an ever-present intensity, and finally somewhat of morbidness; one feels in it an uncertain taste, and the effort of a literary endeavour heroically carried through against an inspiration that is at times rebellious. Yet, from this disappointing and fatiguing work, there radiates out a youthful enthusiasm so genuine and contagious as to leave an ineffaceable impression upon the reader.

This exuberance, however, is of short duration, and the incertitude of the poet in his art gives place to the assurance of self-mastery. Not that a transition cannot be felt; *Lamia*, for example, is not free from the failings which marked the first manner. Again, among the masterpieces, everything is not on the same level. It is still permissible to judge as too ornate, and somewhat decadent in style, the delightful legend of *The Eve of Saint Agnes*; in the pathos of *Isabella, or the Pot of Basil*, all the notes are not of an equal sureness, and elements of too great a diversity are blended but imperfectly. Keats at his best supplies the matter for only a very small collection of poems: the original version of *Hyperion*, almost all the *Odes*, *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, and the most beautiful sonnets. . . . Here asserts itself a wonderful realization of what sobriety can be in its fusion with the force of touch and the wealth of expression. Keats effects that rare union of classical discipline, guided by the example and precepts of the ancients, with the more intrinsically precious matter which the artist finds in Romanticism. The exigence of perfection is there, but also at the same time all the positive substance of which poetry had long since been emptied by a school of correctness based upon reason; the attempt of a Collins is again taken up, but is carried much further; a stronger force of selection, of order and harmony, is brought to bear on an unlimited range of revivified sensations and emotions. Nothing could be more truly Romantic, nor could the very figure of antiquity be animated with more concrete life.

Hyperion is an epic poem in which Keats, competing with Milton on a footing of equality, set out to relate the celestial revolutions of pagan mythology, as did Milton the Christian cycle of a paradise lost and regained. Keats's enterprise is of a bolder and more dangerous character, for the elements of interest which his subject offers are of a still more austere and less human order; but while his imagination is no less powerful it displays a more plastic quality than that of his great fore-

runner. Scarcely outlined as it is, but already arresting by the vastness of conception which it promises, as by its visions of a gigantic and primitive world, this work stands out in wondrous majesty.

The favourite themes in Keats's Romanticism are set in the *Odes* in short and elaborate forms, constructed with harmonious skill: the sculptural grace of Greek attitudes, the nostalgia of the charming myths of Hellas, the changing seasons and the joys of the earth, the anguished yearnings of the soul to find a beauty which endures; and with this 'Dionysian' inspiration is fused the bitter-sweet voluptuousness enclosed in the impassioned meditation of death. Everything here co-operates to enchant a sensual and dreamy contemplation: the outlines, the colour, the emotion, and the melody; the tone has a smooth suavity, and yet is free from any excess of softness or ease; indeed it is constantly relieved by notes of vigour. The most original character of this art is its density; each epithet is extraordinarily rich in suggestion; the long lingering of each word in a thought which lovingly enfolds it, has loaded it with a whole spiritual crystallization. Each of the images, which by an exquisite

the conciseness and nervous exactness of the whole. The rhythms, handled by an artist who is alive to the power of music, are not so much new creations as perfect adaptations to the supreme unity of an impression.

It is useless to remember here the doctrinal purpose which the poet may have framed for himself in the resolutions of his early years. The confessions of these lines are quite other in their candour. A life founded upon sensation reveals the secret of its ultimate melancholy. Without pushing too far our inductions from the texts, we must see in them the seed

has not its secret source in any tragic mystery, and it is thu

inevitable. It springs from the satiety of
as made no demands upon the more comm
nade up of the unconquerable feeling of the fr
forms, as of the vanity of the effort through
to transcend itself. In its bitter realism, its
ess, clothed in harmonies both sumptuou
on Melancholy has a foretaste of the *Fle*

n he died, gave promise of becoming the gre
neration; and one who, better than any o
nited the free inspiration of Romanticism
nciple of the schools of the past. Some hund
m to the level of the highest. His influence
o grow; all those schools which claim as t
tic notion of art have seen in him their mas
elites, just as the English aesthetes, originat
Despite the concentrated and difficult qua
the finer artists, in every nation, have felt
of his example.

Brandes, *Die Hauptströmungen, etc.*, vol. iv, 1876 (Engl
urrents, etc.], 1904); *Cambridge History of English Lite*
II, III, IV; Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1780-18*
et le romantisme français, 1907; E. Halévy, *Histoire*
IXe siècle, vols. i and ii, 1913–23; Leigh Hunt, *Lo*
his Contemporaries, 1828; idem, *Autobiography*, 185
se de Shelley, 1910; T. Moore, *The Letters and Journa*
. Middleton Murry, *Keats and Shakespeare*, 1925; Pierc
the English Romantic Generation, 1919; Schelling, *Th*
Symons, *The Romantic Movement in English Poetry*
la Littérature anglaise, vol. iv, 1864; Trelawny, *Recollec*
Williams, *Journal, etc.*, 1902.

CHAPTER V

THE SEMI-ROMANTICISTS

Among the contemporaries of Coleridge and Shelley, the figures ... before the brilliance ... interest. ... e degree the character of passionate imagination ... elong to their time, but do not bear its single stamp with imperative definiteness While classifying them at their places and in their generation, one may call them 'semi-Romanticists.' They reveal both the persistence of certain psychological elements inherited ... the first signs of a moral transiti ... ticism a deep literary reacti ... erament persists more or le ... e forms; while there are in ... arch for ...

... mixed quality, a remarkable vigour.

...

Yet, never has fame fallen so low ... excessive discredit an exaggerated favour, the result of a transitory harmony with the average taste of his epoch. He was the idol of those who, faithful to the old ideal, were not ... experiencing the need for some novelty in literature ...

relieve a background of abstractions, save an insignificant elegiac music of easy and too familiar rhythm. With the progress of an audacious literature, which from a distance he was able to understand, there awakened in him a more forceful energy of feeling and expression.

His *Italy* is an interesting work. The lifeless part is that which follows, either the merely passive tradition of a scholarly pseudo-classicism, or the example of Byron. The influence of *Childe Harold* is to be felt throughout this whole series of episodes, stories, and local impressions. But Rogers's inspiration is not far removed, at bottom, from that of the didactic writers of the eighteenth century; in vain does he seek to impart, like Byron, a sublime touch to his reflections on history or on life. When he does no violence to his temperament, he has the gift of seeing and catching the character of places and people, of portraying the picturesqueness of Italy, present or past; and in order to inlay and set off these precise suggestions, his art can display a sure, piquant, and felicitous touch. His vignettes, even at the present day, are strikingly true. Not only has he provided the model of a kind of tourist's guide in verse; but he has interpreted in a form accessible to all, in blank verse which is not without force, something of the pathos and splendour with which Romanticism had enriched moral meditation and landscape painting. The work of this belated writer awakened in the conservative part of the public the sense of certain keener notes of expression, which his careful technique harmonized with traditional effects.

Still more famous than Rogers during his lifetime, Moore [1] is less neglected to-day; certain of his shorter poems continue to appear in anthologies. But his work as a whole has completely lost a popularity which equalled that of Byron and

[1] Thomas Moore, born in Dublin, in 1779, won the esteem of scholars by his translation in verse of Anacreon (1800), his *Poems of the Late Thomas Little* (1801), *Epistles, Odes and Other Poems* (1806); then that of the general public by his *Irish Melodies* (1807–34), *Lalla Rookh* (1817), *The Loves of the Angels* (1823). On the other hand, a series of political satires (*The Twopenny Post-Bag*, 1813; *The Fudge Family in Paris*, 1818; *Tom Crib's Memorial to Congress*, 1819; *Fables for the Holy Alliance*, 1823, etc.), served very successfully the cause of the Whig party. In prose, he wrote among other works a novel (*The Epicurean*, 1827); a *Life of Sheridan*, 1825; the friend of Byron, he destroyed the manuscripts of the latter's memoirs, and gave an apologetic colouring to his biography (*The Letters and Journals of Lord Byron*, 1830). He also edited Byron's works (1832–5), and died in 1852. *Poetical Works*, ed. by Godley, 1910; *Selected Poems*, by Falkiner, 1903. *Memoirs, etc.*, ed. by Russell, 1856. See studies by Symington (1880), Vallat (Paris, 1886), Brémond, 1904; Gwynn (English Men of Letters), 1905; Baldensperger, 'Moore et Vigny' (*Modern Language Review*, vol. i, 1906); Thomas, *Moore en France*, 1911.

history will probably leave him one of the first places among the Romanticists of the second order; for his poetry, however nerveless it may be, yet possesses an element of inspired originality ir

A wholly

of his youtl

poet; a conventionality with a flavour of artifice will thus always be found intermingled with his marvellous ease of touch. But in this pleasing and somewhat false form of writing, no one has ever been more sincere; the very temperament of the poet is here attuned to the discreet gallantry, the elegiac sensibility, the witty delicacy, which go to make a successful drawing-room improviser. And the gifted poet is

itself in this tempered transposition of its own essence, entirely adapted to suit both the preferences and the language of

be found interwoven; Beckford, Southey, and Byron prepared

ments, takes place according to the author's own formula. The whole is suavely romantic, somewhat over-sweet, but relieved by a sprightly vivacity and the intensity of a coloured vision.

By combining tenderness with a veiled ardour, humour with the soberly sensual grace of eastern imagery, Moore complies with the needs and curiosity of English taste, without exceeding the measure enforced by a clearly felt desire for idealization. In no other work does the talent of the writer more clearly show its affinity with properly feminine aesthetics. This vast fairy tale, of thin substance, but overflowing with inexhaustible lyricism, displays an art already Victorian, which would seem in some respects to announce the touch of Tennyson. The magic of the style, and the easy, varied happiness of an astonishing prosodic virtuosity, would make it a kind of masterpiece, were it not for a certain lavishness which overburdens the delicacy of its arabesques, and for the too fragile structure of this palace of the Arabian nights.

Lalla Rookh is accompanied by a prose commentary, in which the verve of Moore disports itself in numberless allusions to his time; indeed, with him mockery is never very far removed from the most gorgeous play of imagination. The charm of his nature is due in great part of this Irish versatility, which delights in the close interplay of slyness and sentiment. He is one of the masters of political satire. After some unhappy attempts in the solemn style of the eighteenth century, he found his true vein, in a familiar manner free from all vulgarity. *The Fudge Family in Paris*, for instance, is irresistibly funny; and the comic inventiveness which unfolds itself in these poems of free movement, of a form and measure pleasantly popular, at the expense both of national prejudices and of the ponderous dogmatism on which was founded the imperious order of the Holy Alliance, often attains a high artistic worth through its accuracy of observation as through the precise neatness of the form.

There are yet other sides to Moore's talent; as the editor and biographer of Byron he is still entitled to recognition; but it is in his capacity of elegiac poet, and creator of liquid sonorities, the evocator of an East at once pagan and Christian, that the poet has left the deepest mark upon his time. *The Loves of the Angels* could well give delight to an age when a new spirit of moral audacity was beginning to take an eager interest in obscure religious myths and fallen angels. Here, also, the poet's talent remains striking, and was even more so with his contemporaries. Lamartine and Vigny, in particular, among the French Romanticists, bear witness to the influence exercised by Moore.

Apart from Rogers and Moore, this period is rich in poets [illegible]

[illegible]

lastly, William Combe,[5] James and Horace Smith,[6] who reveal, in their parodies of the first Romanticists, the persistence of [illegible]

[illegible]

Quincey.—Charles Lamb[7] is wholly bound up with the inner history of the first generation of Romanticism; a judicious friend, an enthusiast in literature, he encourages and guides

[illegible]

1904.

the efforts of the Lake poets; he himself is a poet, with a note of moving simplicity and tender effusion which relates him to Wordsworth. His life of retirement is not without its tragic shocks, its long and cruel periods of anxiety; he fights to save his sister from madness, and himself comes dangerously near the threshold of insanity, actually overstepping it on at least one occasion. His natural tastes make him dwell in the realms of imagination and dreams, while his artistic soul belongs to the past. A highly sensitive disposition lays him open to all the tremors of the heart, and his work is a varied meditation on the sad mystery of time and change. His nature seemed attuned, as it were beforehand, to the most pathetic chords of the new literature, and his lot afforded him ample opportunity of being in all sincerity, and by virtue of his experience, the vehement echo of human suffering.

He was anything but that. While his genius has all the emotions, the curious and fanciful touches of Romanticism, it has neither its passion nor its fever. A silent modesty, verging on the heroic, curbs the over-effusive expression of his feelings. And a certain fine and subtle element, diffused in his thoughts, saves them from any untoward display of intensity, leading them back irresistibly to a supple sense of exact fitness. This essential element is humour, with which no writer was ever so intimately and deeply permeated. The psychological quality of this mental attitude of life—made up of an attentive playfulness, of the expert handling of all the shades of sentiment—harmonizes with a discreet and restrained tenderness; but bringing with it a lucid consciousness, a self-possession, a sense of relative values, together with an accurate power of observation, it transforms the Romanticism of Lamb by enriching it. This Romanticism is thus divested of the exclusive ardour of imagination and heart, without which it cannot be said to exist in its pure state. Lamb's humour represents an original revenge of personality over circumstance, through which, in a Romantic age, a mind which still belongs to its time transcends it, and joins up with other times. His art exhausts and reconciles the aromas of very different flowerings in literature; and along with that of the Renascence, we feel in it the persisting flavour of classicism.

Nothing is more truly individual than this delightful and at the same time scholarly fusion. Lamb's personality is unique. The essay, a form which provides him with his favourite mode of expression, becomes in his hands the

characters; the comedy and drama of each day, around one

spirit of irony even into the inevitable self-pity that always

and mixed formula of the *Spectator*, to the example of Montaigne. But Lamb is not a moralist nor a psychologist; his object is not research, analysis, or confession; he is, above all, an artist. He has no aim save the reader's pleasure, and his own. If we find contact with his work to be both refining and elevating, it is through an influence which hides itself, and acts indirectly. On the contrary, everything is adjusted with a view to our intellectual delectation; emotion itself is a means, a touch which enhances and diversifies the picture. Never
delight
Eacl
broider the most unexpected variations upon a background of reflection and anecdote Humour here is diffused everywhere; it is like an atmosphere which heightens and multiplies the particular effect of each device. Lamb is amusing, paradoxical, ingenious, touching, poetic, eloquent; and the impression stays with us that he is all these in turn, without ever being but these and nothing else; that a detached and versatile consciousness allows him to gauge each attitude, its scope and limits; and thus procures for us in each case not only the satisfaction of enjoying a mood, but also that of seeing around and beyond it. The solemn seriousness with

which comic elements are worked out and thus set off i one of the forms, the most easily understood, of this ess duality of mind. The purpose of sly insincerity, and, fashion, of trickery which is most often that of the wri reflected in numberless ways through his style. The ord the discontinuity or logic in the development, the ton choice of words, constitute as many notes in this infi varied scale of expressions, which ranges from the pun t loftiest eloquence or suggestion, and which shows the w supreme art in his self-control, in his power almost alwa stop in time. Lamb can be simple at will; and his most effects remain free from laboriousness or affectation. more astonishing than the fertility of his verve is his su of taste.

The reason is that he possesses the most delicately pra critical judgment. The finesse of his literary perce comes from a culture, both ancient and modern, less e than it is deep and permeating, which reaches the inne fibres of his mental being. There is a measure of origi even in this humanism; it is coloured by strong prefe and avowed partialities. In his appreciation of literary v Lamb remains a man; his whole personality becomes inv and his moods play by no means the least important There is supreme sharpness in these impressions; they most often the scale of accepted values; but they also d from it in order to correct it by the boldness of a insight, or enrich it with paradoxical shades in whic temperament gracefully disports itself.

These reactions, as a whole, constitute a doctrine. takes sides; he is a vigorous supporter of Romanticism much as his passionate admiration returns, beyond the cal school, to the old authors of the Renascence an seventeenth century. He is full of a love, fed on fa acquaintance, not only for the Elizabethan dramatist also for the masters whose archaism is a bar to enjoy and who are no longer read. His style is steeped in manner; his art assimilates and re-creates, through trans means, which yet retain something of their primitive char the delightfully learned gravity of Sir Thomas Brown *naïveté* of Izaak Walton. The tales in which he an sister have simplified the dramas of Shakespeare rem favourite reading with children; the *Specimens of E* *Dramatic Poets* stimulated the sympathetic interest whi

beginning to be felt in Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Massinger, and Chapman; he retrieved from oblivion the names of some authors, such as Wither. Lamb's action in the field of criticism was diffuse and truly fruitful: he contributed more than any other in reviving the claims of writers who are perhaps the most truly national England can show, and in combining this distant influence with the living and present spirit of literature.

His letters are charming; much more spontaneous than his essays, and of a quality both of thought and of verve which is equivalent, if not equal, they reveal the bond existing between his entire work and his deeper personality, as well as the natural truth of the vein from which his writings have sprung.

In a perspective which shows it between Lamb and Hazlitt, the figure of Leigh Hunt [1] would appear at the first glance to lack relief. Numerous traits go to compose it, none of which has a master's decisive strength. But when more closely examined, it becomes attractive, and assumes its true character, which is average and representative. This so-called Radical has moderate instincts; this doctrinarian is a generous idealist, whose principles are nearly all reducible to sentiments. The political, social, and religious ideas of Hunt express the needs of a sincere heart; he is eager to restore in society and in men's souls the order which he seems to threaten; what he does is to justify it, purify and establish it on the more solid foundation of spiritual values. What there is of a diffuse

inevitable and crushing comparisons. He inaugurated theatrical criticism, only to be surpassed in this field by Hazlitt. Frequently at least do we come upon pages of greater force, which arrest our attention, reveal a man in the writer, as well as throw light upon his times. The critic in Hunt possesses intuition and correct taste; he also loves the old authors, and sets the example of a sensibility naturally adapted to the expressions of the national genius which classicism tried to disown. But he has not these gifts in a supreme degree. The book which has most chance of preserving the name of Hu [illegible] full of ch [illegible] ıp with the [illegible]

[illegible] spirit, in [illegible] his unflinching sincerity, his sharp, examining eye, disturb all the values set up by convention and compromise. There is a touch of Rousseau in him, an element of suffering pride, a [illegible]

[illegible] its richness, as in some measure it does its uneasiness. His outlook is essentially critical, and bears the stamp of religious dissent; it has been formed at the time of the French Revolution, and under the influence of a philosophy of progress [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 'Essays, ed. by Zeitlin, 1913, *Selected Essays*, ed. by Sampson, 1917; *Liber* [illegible] *New Writings of William* [illegible]

through reason. Hazlitt is in certain respects the ally of those intellectual Radicals who, after 1815, revive the cause of vanquished liberty. He believes in the virtue of doctrines, and is ready to stand by the consequences of his principles until the end. But at the same time, his mind is deeply impregnated with Romanticism. He knows and experiences the fecund powers of intuitive knowledge, the limits of logical intelligence. A strong and direct sense of the inner life, a penetrating sympathy which lays bare to his gaze the secrets of other souls, such are the gifts from which Hazlitt's work derives its originality. They imply a consciousness of self that is intensified by a more vivid faculty of imagination and feeling; and belong indeed to the age of Coleridge and Wordsworth.

He should be ranked with the critics of life. As such, he shows insight and virility rather than bitterness; no one was more alive than Hazlitt to the joys of independence, of art, and of the truth which is freely sought and tasted; the courage of a proud soul is the diffused lesson which emanates from his writings; without illusion, he draws from human things, and more from nature in her untouched beauty, a solace which goes to nurture his energy, and strengthens him in his resolutions of unwavering patience. His political ideas, and a certain tone of intellectuality, link up the man in him with a rationalism which is persistent, or which tends to reappear. His *Liber Amoris* takes its place among the books which sought to cure Romanticism by giving expression to it. It is the study of a sentimental illusion, and of the weakness of judgment which this entails. It is, no less, the study of a 'case' of feminine duplicity, of an atrophy of feeling, in a spirit of cruel realism which heralds Thackeray. But although this brief romance is enacted in an atmosphere of sober irony, it nevertheless is fraught with the fever of painful passion; and here, as elsewhere, the moralist in Hazlitt works less by way of analysis than by flashes of perception, whether from partial gleams a blinding certitude be gradually evolved, or light burst forth all at once. Each perspective that he opens up on existence is thickly strewn with these sudden revelations, which turn inside out the artificial setting of our lives, upset the order of appearances, and disclose the truth which none desires or is able to see. Hazlitt's moral code is that of frankness; and this with him is the outcome of an unerring, bold, quick faculty of penetrating the spiritual depth of experience.

He is indebted to the same faculty for his rare virtue as a literary critic. Each of his portraits is a divination; with one quick movement he places himself at the centre of a personality, and re-creates it through a sympathy which closely grasps the contours of its characteristics. This plastic com-

of a temperament; and the keen impressionism of Hazlitt, nurtured by the study of moods, is rather similar to the method of Sainte-Beuve; less supple and minute, less enveloping, it has often more of an untamed vigour. So frequently is his attention focused upon the hidden side of souls that one feels it is governed by a constant intuition of the subconscious; and his methods of investigation, with the emphasis they lay upon the semi-deceptions of the mind by itself, and the involuntary revenge of sinful nature, examples of which are to be seen at all moments in literature and society, are practically equivalent to the psycho-analytical studies of the present day.

marked out the vantage points, and gauged the heights on

ery case his

icipates the

s is a strong

e is forcible

essive traits

. perception.

ubjected to the continuous light of consciousness, and examined in turn under all its aspects. Such a device ensures novement, sincerity, and a telling force of style. But this liscontinuity in an order which is wholly organic is not entirely tappy. It gives no safety against repetition and prolixity; at imes it wearies the mind that cannot readily perceive the ogical sequence of thought, the point of departure or the goal. At bottom extremely English and national, Hazlitt's critical nethod finds in the insufficiency of composition the defect of ts quality.

By the tolerance of his tastes, Hazlitt already rose above he plane of combative literature; he heralded the passing ver to a synthetic age, in which Romanticism, accepted and ssimilated, took its place among the legitimate expressions of British genius. This transitional character is still more clearly narked in De Quincey.[1] Here, the critical phase really succeeds the creative; and this criticism, animated as it is itself y the new spirit, turns round upon it in order to judge it with secret malice.

This is not to say that in De Quincey Romanticism does not emain deeply rooted in the very fibres of temperament. His hildhood, his youth, are crossed and recrossed by adventurous pisodes which betray a moral originality, almost bordering n an unsettled state of mind. But on the other hand, the ntellectual side of his nature has the gift, the need of clarity; f he lives his Romanticism, he looks at himself in the process of iving it, and with a critical analysis passes judgment upon it.

[1] Thomas De Quincey, born in Manchester in 1785, son of a merchant, traced is descent from a noble Anglo-Norman family, but without very certain oundation; in 1802 he fled from school, wandering about for several months, nd leading a lonely life in London; returning to a normal mode of living, he pent some time at Oxford, then attached himself to the Lake poets and lived tear them. In 1804 he fell a victim to opium, and became increasingly addicted to the drug, only partially throwing off the habit towards 1848. Mingled vith the literary society of Edinburgh, he contributed to Scottish and London eviews. In 1821 there began to appear his *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (revised in 1856). He published a novel, *Klosterheim*, 1832; *The Logic of Political Economy*, 1844; but devoted himself mainly, until his death in 1859, o essay-writing and occasional compositions. *Collected Writings*, ed. by Masson, 1890; *Confessions*, ed. by Masson, 1904; *Essays*, ed. by Whibley, 1904; *Literary Criticism*, ed. by Darbishire, 1909; *Diary*, ed. by H. A. Eaton, 1927. See biographies by Japp, 1890; Masson (English Men of Letters), 1881; Hogg (*De Quincey and his Friends*), 1895; studies by Saintsbury (*Essays in English Literature*), 1890; Leslie Stephen (*Hours in a Library*), 1892; A. Symons (*Studies in Prose and Verse*), 1904; Arvède Barine (*Névroses, etc.*), 1898; Dunn (*De Quincey's Relation to German Literature*), 1901; Salt (*De Quincey*), 1904; Durant (*De Quincey, etc., in their Relations to the Germans*, Modern Language Association of America), 1907.

Above all, De Quincey lacks that fruitful vigour, and that simple energy, which help to carry on around him the work of the great creators.

kind. Curbed as it was, his need for expression and compensation sought an outlet by indirect channels. The *Confessions of an Opium Eater* show in a poetical prose the transposition of an incomplete lyricism; the *Reminiscences of the English Lake Poets* reveal in this devout disciple the malice of a

which literature had prompted: incapable as he is of sublimating his experience into poetry through a process of pure

their feverish ardour spends itself in emotions and ecstasies

recounted in an inspired tone the sins and glories of opium. Out of a rather futile prudence, he claims to instruct the reader, to put him on his guard; but no one is deceived; the complacent theme of the book is the dangerous and enchanting exaltation which a mighty poison, full of all the witchcraft of the East, can awaken in a human soul. It is this imaginative impression that De Quincey above all desires to create. In place of a simple narrative of facts, we find substituted a more or less voluntary idealization, by means of which the artist fashions and organizes a general evocation. With its repentant notes, and moments of timidity, this confession tends to be nothing other than the seductive portrayal of an intoxicating intensity of mental life, even if such rapture has despair lurking in its wake. All sense of objective truth is lost in the continually recurring fits of ecstatic dizziness; but so lucid is the mind of the self-analysing victim that the picture he has drawn of these dreams still preserves a documentary value for the student of mental pathology.

The story as he tells it is bathed in an atmosphere of fatality and mystery, produced and maintained by an art which is fertile in resources. In order to describe the sombre destiny to which De Quincey shows no displeasure that his soul should be a prey, he makes a bold use of the whole scale of poetic effects. His prose becomes animated, warms up, acquires a rhythmic flow, and assumes the colour as well as the sonority of the highest descriptive eloquence. Visions as strikingly brilliant as they are terrible or enigmatical, unfold themselves to the accompaniment of an incomparable verbal music, new as much as suggestive at that time, and whose only failing is a slightly too visible artifice. A writer of rare quality, and in certain respects original, De Quincey is not one of the great masters of style because the instrument he uses is not entirely in harmony with his nature, lending itself only to an imperfect literary sincerity. Here, and in other pieces of the same tone (*Our Ladies of Sorrow*, *Daughter of Lebanon*, etc.), we find traces of an affected language, which impair an otherwise genuine gift of expression.

The rest of his work offers a keen interest, although the sign of a secret failing of the writer's intellectual will-power never does wholly disappear. His many-sided activity never concentrates strongly enough upon an object. His analytical bent leads De Quincey to the study of political economy; capable of following the play of ideas, and won over by the

prestige of German metaphysics, he reads Kant, Fichte, Schelling, Jean Paul, and makes a name for himself among the small group of men who in England hold the key to transcendental philosophy. But he squanders this privilege in ephemeral articles, with no great profit. It is when dealing with subjects closer at hand that the critic in him is seen at his best. This intimate friend of the Lake poets provides us with a picture of them more familiar and precise than that in which others gave expression above all to their respectful admiration. The portraits he sketches testify to a keen penetration, aided by a complex community of feelings in which there enter some sympathy, a craving for truth, and also an obscure malignity; by a perception of the unconscious side of high and noble personalities, that is the more unerring, as the critic has more clearly grasped in his own self the moral failings of mankind.

Here again, he has all that goes to the making of talent, and almost to the making of a poet; he can see and depict nature, enliven a tale, stir up by a happy choice of words a living group of impressions; but he has neither the perfect simplicity of mind nor that of style; and the opinions expressed in his entire critical work, while very often of a shrewd or ingenious quality, do not possess that unerring and safe accuracy which betokens a *forgetfulness* of self, and an impassioned desire for nothing but justice.

3. *Landor and Peacock.*—Like Hazlitt, Landor [1] is a lonely spirit, of an even more retiring disposition, and less involved in the struggles of his time. The contemporary of Lamb, he traverses the whole of the Romantic period without ever merging into it, and he survives it until the middle of the following age. His long career links up the declining classicism of the

[1] Walter Savage Landor, born at Warwick in 1775, of middle-class family, studied at Rugby, was sent down from Oxford for his republican ideas (1793); inheriting independent means, he wrote *Poems* (1795), an epic, *Gebir*, 1798; *Simonidea*, 1806, etc.; a tragedy, *Count Julian*, 1812. After several adventurous episodes he settled in Italy, where he spent the greater part of life. He published *Imaginary Conversations*, 1824–9; *Examination of Shakespeare, etc.*, 1834; *Pericles and Aspasia*, 1836; *Pentameron*, 1837; *Hellenics*, 1847; *Heroic Idylls*, 1863, and died in Florence in 1864. *Works*, ed. by Forster, 1876; ed. by Crump, 1891; *Complete Works*, ed. by T. Earle Welby, 1927. *Letters*, ed. by Wheeler, 1899; *Selections*, ed. by Colvin, 1882; ed. by Clymer, 1898; *Imaginary Conversations*, selections by Cavenagh, 1914. See biographies by Forster, 1869; Colvin (English Men of Letters), 1881; studies by Houghton (*Monographs*), 1873; Evans, 1892; Leslie Stephen (*Hours in a Library*), 1892; Saintsbury (*Essays in English Literature*, 2nd series), 1895; Bradley (*The Early Poems of Landor*), 1914; W. H. Mason (*Walter Savage Landor, poète lyrique*), 1924; Elwin (*Southey and Landor*), 1934.

somewhat artificial motive is inseparable from his creative impulses. Despite the genuine pride of his personal disposition, Landor remains the disciple of a stoical virtue and of a strong eloquence in which are to be recognized the civic and oratorical examples of Rome.

[illegible]

artistic sense inclines towards regular and well-defined forms, of precise relief and devoid of mystery. Lander's classicism is not bookish, but natural and spontaneous. He attempts in all sincerity to clothe thoughts which are majestic, but rife with the emotions and turmoils of a restless age, in a language that has the solidity and the polish of marble.

This effort exercised itself both in verse and in prose. It is in prose, however, that Landor has shown the greatest mastery, and obtained the most poetical effects. His early poem, *Gebir*, has a strange and arid grandeur; of eastern inspiration, like the *Thalaba* of Southey, it gives evidence of a just instinct of the regeneration that must come by way of simple truth. But the abstract style of the eighteenth century is in it a persisting factor; and striking passages cannot redeem a radical absence of life and reality. Shorter poems, Greek idylls, and stanzas as clearly cut as antique cameos, have more felicity of touch, a purity of contour that is often charming, a freshness of imagination and delineation. The blank verse of Landor, full of the memory of Milton, has force and an ample measure; but nowhere does his poetry offer the character of an inevitable form; while the cadence of his

[illegible]

not yet consciously outgrown the Romantic phase of direct

elf-expression. He obviously passes judgments, and takes ides; his portraits represent personal reactions, and their one is at times intensified to the point of violence by an ony which seeks in vain to temper itself through an infusion f humour.

The quality of the mind which interprets and brings back life these great figures of the past, from the remotest times f antiquity up to the present, and which calls up round each setting of civilization or of nature, together with the force, he brilliance, the masterly skill displayed in so many scenes, pisodes, and landscapes, lend the collection the value of a ork that is unequal, yet compels admiration. The venture of paradoxical an undertaking has to a great extent been a iccess. It must be added that the merit of the form makes ne forget the deficiencies of this type of writing. Landor's inguage is chosen and rhythmic, instinct with a subtle music hich is not that of verse, and which, through the accuracy f a delicate adaptation to the feeling, suggests the impression f regularity that the structure of metre usually produces. f varied character, this fine harmony is most often dignified, ententious, and noble, just like the favourite tone of the riter; but this nobleness is compatible with all shades of motion, moments of simple and serious familiarity, intervals f playful relaxing, and ecstatic and inspired meditations, in hich Landor, more surely than De Quincey, reaches the upreme heights of English prose.

With Peacock,[1] the duality of a divided nature develops penly into an aggressive freedom as regards Romanticism. His is not only the detachment of an observer who watches he flood of impassioned literature pass before his eyes; his ook betrays the amusement of an agile, critical intelligence. man of transition as well as Landor, he is, above all, in eaction against his time; and if he announces the future, it is

[1] Thomas Love Peacock, born in 1785 at Weymouth, of middle-class family, as educated privately and passed the greater part of his long life in the service f the East India Company; published verse (*Rhododaphne*, 1818, etc.); novels: *eadlong Hall*, 1816; *Melincourt*, 1817; *Nightmare Abbey*, 1818; *Maid Marian*, 822; *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, 1829; *Crotchet Castle*, 1831; *Gryll Grange*, 1861. e died in 1866, leaving dramatic works (published by Young, 1910), and a orrespondence with Shelley, etc. (ed. by Garnett, 1910). *Works*, ed. by Cole, 873; *Prose Works*, ed. by Garnett, 1891; *Poems*, ed. by Johnson, 1906; *eacock's Four Ages of Poetry, Shelley's Defence of Poetry, etc.*, ed. by Brettmith, 1921. See biography by Van Doren, 1911; studies by Saintsbury *Essays in English Literature*, 1890); Freeman (*Thomas Love Peacock, a Critical tudy*), 1911; J. B. Priestley, *Thomas Love Peacock*, 1927; J. J. Mayoux, *Un picurien anglais, Thomas Love Peacock*, 1932.

moral, and political matters he prides himself upon the fact that he thinks with a boldness unrestrained by any sentiment. He entertains radical opinions, which become attenuated with the passing of years, without being destroyed; his arrow-like comments, shot at the robust conservatism of British instinct, have a cruel force of penetration.

On the other hand, he loved Shelley, if he hated the Lake poets; he is merciless towards the economists and liberal doctrinaires; in spite of all, his life and work cannot be separated from the triumph of sentiment, and the chief current of this age. Through both life and work there runs a Romantic vein, which spreads itself out at first, and then, being energetically repressed, hides itself, without ceasing to be recognizable. It is as an adversary that he most frequently handles the

takes up the Romantic eye for the purpose of deriding it, but

His novels are almost pure fantasies; the logic which holds

be found many amusing figures, and several of which answer to actual and well-known personalities, are simply sketches. The body of each work consists of reflections and dialogues. Peacock desires nothing further than to reproduce conversa-

whole savours of the philosophical tale in the manner of Voltaire, and of the argument novel in that of Diderot; while certain comic devices, bordering on caricature, recall the English realists of the eighteenth century. A more fundamental resemblance is that which harmonizes the intellectual aroma of this comedy with the works of Meredith's youth. And the style, scholarly and classical to excess, is loaded with an irony which draws delightful effects from a fully conscious and subtle pedantry.

All this is not the work of a very vigorous creator, even although the mind which reveals itself is sincere and personal. The substance of these novels is at times very thin, which, however, does not save the form from being at times heavy. The dividing line between farce and humour is not always observed. Sheer impertinence is too often associated with the most fine and suggestive drollery. At bottom, there is a certain inconsistency in Peacock. The unity of his nature, the permanent axis of his mind, are not very easily discernible. He has the conversationalist's brilliant gifts, and a little of his versatility. But some of his remarks have a singularly wide bearing, just as his criticism is often exceptionally scathing. *Headlong Hall* and *Crotchet Castle* are still read with keen pleasure; and *Nightmare Abbey* is a little masterpiece in mockery; the satire of Romanticism, then in its heyday, is carried out with a penetrating discernment of its inevitable weaknesses, of the psychological fallacies or the morbid excesses which sully its exalted spontaneity with a secret literary artifice. To all transcendental reveries, and to the cult of the mysterious and the terrifying, Peacock smilingly opposes sound good health. No text more clearly shows the persistence, in certain writers as in the average mass of the nation, of a lucid rational temper which reserves itself, remembers, and abides its time.

To be consulted: *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. xi, Chap. XIII; vol. xii, Chaps. V, VII, VIII, IX; Derocquigny, *Charles Lamb*, 1904; Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1780–1830*, 1920; Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*, 1825 (*Works*, ed. by Waller, vol. iv, 1902); Herford, *The Age of Wordsworth*, 1899; Leigh Hunt, *Autobiography*, 1850; H. M. Peacock and M. C. B. Wheeler, *Selected English Essays*, 1911; H. Crabb Robinson, *Diary*, ed. by Sadler, 1869; Salt, *De Quincey*, 1904; Stoddart, *Personal Recollections of Lamb, Hazlitt, etc.*, 1903; H. Walker, *The English Essay and Essayists*, 1915; *Modern English Essays*, ed. by E. Rhys, 5 vols., 1922.

BOOK VI

THE SEARCH FOR BALANCE (1832–1875)

CHAPTER I

THE NEW PERIOD—CAUSES AND CHARACTERISTICS

FROM 1830 onwards it is more and more evident that a literary transition is developing. And 1832 is the year of a great

literature and society.

Romanticism indeed is not dead; but its creative force is becoming exhausted, and writers now turn in ever-increasing

he inner move-

omanticism, or

ad never been officially recognized; to the end, they had been opposed by conservative opinion, and their disputed triumph was rather a question of fact than of rights. Besides, only some men

a new and moving beauty, forced on the general public the anxious awareness, if not the love, of a literature whose audacity soared beyond the taste of the crowd. The popular

of general intensity, and gave the impression of unrestricted daring in the quest of literary effects Thus, the average *Englishman* was instinctively conscious of the fact that he was participating, either as a willing adherent or as a tolerant

onlooker—and this for more than a generation—in a phase of moral life where sensibility and imagination ruled in freedom.

Therefore the strain of Romanticism, and the anxiety born of its excesses, are felt even by those who have not experienced its feverish glow. The psychological reaction which is now beginning finds a response, more or less dimly, in most minds, and may be likened in the extent of its influence to a national movement.

This reversion in the rhythmic life of the mind observes the law of alternate sequences. After the rule of emotions, dreams, and the tumults of the soul, there comes a time when the need of an order born of reason begins to manifest itself. The key-note of the new era, therefore, will be a pronounced call for rationality in all things. The literary phase which is now about to begin will, in its essential character, be allied to that against which Romanticism had previously rebelled; it will be neo-classical in its principle; once again the desire for truth will take first place among the motives of creation; realism as one of the means of expression will be given greater latitude, and the claims of a careful style will be more often emphasized.

The moral pulse beats in agreement with the circumstances of the time. During the Victorian era, art forms part of a coherent social whole. Simultaneously and from every direction comes the call for order and discipline. The Reform Act sets at rest the political disturbances by satisfying the impatient demands of the middle classes, and seems to inaugurate an age of stability. After the crisis which followed the struggle against the French Revolution and Napoleon, England sets about organizing herself with a view to internal prosperity and progress. At peace with Europe, she wishes to be at peace with herself. Rules of conduct and religious beliefs have been shaken in the storm; Romanticism has championed the claims of passion, and upheld the rights of the individual; the laxity in morals as witnessed during the regency of George IV has equalled that of the most unbridled periods of the eighteenth century. With the advent to power of a middle class largely imbued with the spirit of Puritanism, and the accession of a queen to the throne, English society reassumes a larger measure of self-control. Henceforth an accepted standard of stricter morality—sincere or merely conventional—is imposed by common consent; and with Carlyle lies the task of voicing the principles which preside over this national return to a sterner notion of duty.

The practical energy brought into play in the conquest of matter also obeys certain laws; here, again, it is a case of disciplined effort. New discoveries are daily added to the

powers and the very type of an industrial and commercial nation, all confirm and still further intensify one central impulse: the English mind is thus led to reasoned-out habits, positive attention, and cautious methods in action and in thought. And so the basic principle of a teeming economic activity favours in literature the return to precision in form, to beauty within the limits of reason, and to values which have received the stamp of universal approval.

This close connection between material expansion on the one hand, and a phase of realism and order on the other, finds definite expression in a privileged sphere of activity, which is, as it were, a common centre whence radiates at once the power

whereby mind can
y science has been
d the arts; during
ge of an *élite*, and
y cultured person;

about the middle of the nineteenth century, it comes to hold a place of primal importance among the intellectual preoccupations of the average man. It proves its worth by the control it exercises over the physical universe, and also by the idea of unity which it offers or promises to the innumerable seekers in the many branches of knowledge. It gives power, and also the satisfaction of logical thinking; it holds supreme sway during this new age. It helps the progress of production, and is furthered by it in return. It

type of a mentality that is essentially counter-Romantic, at the same time as it precisely defines the psychological tone of the period

From 1830 onwards, the parallel and simultaneous development of all the sciences of mind and matter proceeds with the rapid, imperious, irresistible trend of great historical changes. A vast combination of forces is felt to be in play; and such a combination as will of necessity transform life, modify the condition of man, and definitively establish his place in nature. From the very beginning there is evidence of the ambitious quest for an all-embracing synthesis, a supreme theory, a central point towards which the highest attainable results in each science would increasingly tend to converge. And when Spencer, continuing the biological hypotheses of Darwin, organizes knowledge in its entirety into a philosophy of evolution, the whole scientific movement seems to reach its inevitable conclusion.

English literature, therefore, in the years which follow 1830, will be deeply moulded by the authority of a reason which has grown more exacting and active, and which finds its direct and main outlet in science. But it must not be understood that this character alone defines the literature of the period. Far from it. The prestige of knowledge, as of its ally industrialism, may seem more and more to be taking hold upon society; but social life is still very far from becoming a willing victim to the severe dictates of the scholars of reason. In fact, the Victorian age does not bring science, in the full sense of the word, into the actual life of every day, and cannot, because the great majority of the nation are not interested in anything beyond empiricism, whether of the lowest or of the most refined kind. Compromise stamps this type of civilization; and monetary gain rather than the love of truth is the magnetic force which spurs on its activity. It bears within itself the hope of progress through self-controlling thought; but with the masses this hope is only perceived, or understood, as a desire for enjoyment or money-making, which, in order to be satisfied, turns to the popularized elements of knowledge.

And what is of greater importance, the psychological tone of the period is by no means pure; in fact, it is less so now than ever before. Till the fated days when an ancient literature reaches its dying phase, the principle of the preservation of the past in the present acquires a broader and ever broader influence, a more and more powerful sway. And this principle is truer as the moral organism of a people approaches maturity, as the nation in the fullness of its development becomes conscious of its identity, and begins to appreciate

the value of its past. Now the Victorian age would seem to correspond to the decisive, perfected ripeness of the original English genius; to the phase when this originality, in full [illegible]

[illegible]

years of the nineteenth century the English mind knows deeper and fuller vibrations than at any other moment in the history of its growth; one feels in it at once the refreshed and still [illegible]

[illegible]

as the most powerful and the greatest among all the periods of English culture.

On the other hand, while the quality of the national soul becomes [illegible] so say, [illegible] the first [illegible] part of [illegible] With th[illegible] more wi[illegible] public for the works of the best among past and present writers, and the [illegible] diffusion of litera[illegible] the serial novel, [illegible] newspaper, at once the organ of information and of popular education. The mass of the nation, even to the lowest of its classes, is being born to the life of the mind. Never before have writers of comparatively humble birth been so relatively, or so absolutely, numerous. The effect of this increase is felt not only in the number of the unities, or cells, which go to compose the moral organism of the nation, but also in the many-sided nature of the elements thus grouped together in a composite whole. For the classes which gain access to culture represent, as it wer[illegible] a continual rejuvenation; [illegible] what obscurely, they hav[illegible] but their faculties are r[illegible] contribute to strengthen the elemental forces of the national

life, and tend to bring literature back to its origin. With this evocation of the past it is, one may say, largely the past itself, in its newest and most living form, which thus becomes incorporated in the present. And not only have we thus an ever-increasing proportion of minds who bring with them the gift of an almost virgin sensibility to literature; but also, in accordance with a very simple law of experience, as the social foundation of the literary art is being broadened, we witness at the same time an increase in the number and diversity of the dissentient temperaments—those which, whether erratic, belated, or prophetic, are pitched in another key than that of their epoch.

Lastly, in so far as Romanticism had expressed a restless state of the deeper life of the soul, and in so far as its decline answered the establishment of Victorian balance, this decline could be neither complete nor sudden, because the unrest in the social world did not disappear with the advent of an order which aimed at greater stability, and, in fact, achieved it. Scarcely have political disturbances been allayed, when there is a fresh and serious outbreak in the economic world; the Victorian period, quiet as it is, throbs with the feverish tremors of anxiety and trouble; this agitation, never quite appeased, can momentarily subside, or break out again so strongly that the whole order of the nation is threatened with an upheaval. From 1840 to 1850 in particular, England seems to be on the verge of a revolution; the novel with a purpose, and a whole series of kindred publications, reflect this disturbed spirit, which is not without an influence on the whole of literature; and a special form of Romanticism, fed by the emotional unrest in the social sphere, derives a renewed vitality from these sources.

To the combined effect of all these causes is due the survival and prolongation of Romanticism, which can be likened, not so much to the twilight glimmer of a closing day, as to a warm glow of sustained light whose radiance is felt to spread in every direction. The spirit of Romanticism continues to influence the innermost consciousness of the age which sees a Tennyson, a Thackeray, a Browning, and an Arnold; it permeates almost every thought, just as it colours almost every mode of expression. Even its adversaries, and those who would escape its spell, are impregnated with it. To combat its spell, use is made of the very arms which it itself employs; Carlyle, in denouncing it, does so in a style which is

1830. New vibrations have been added to the main chord; the tone has been changed; the value of the suggestion is no longer the same; but there is scarcely any alteration in one essential component factor, and this is the element which may be termed Romantic. It continues to reveal itself with such persistence that when, at the most recent turning-point in literary history—the years from 1875 to 1880, and the

direct. For it is no easy matter to remedy such a disease, which intensifies the powers of the soul, and imparts a morbid taste even to the desire for recovery; it is not easy to cure that accentuated form of an ancient sensibility which has come to be an integral part of the permanent fund of human experience.

And not only does Romanticism continue to live, but the old trunk retains enough vigour to send forth young and promising shoots. The very exercise of reason and the pursuit of scientific studies, together with all the psychological causes which are about to promote a second classicism, stir up a desire for compensation, and awaken an instinctive

morality and belief. At the same time, from the sphere of industry, where everything is based on facts, there emanates a mood of indifference towards anything that relates to the supernatural. Lastly, the science of nature, and that of human origins, now bring unexpected assistance to the spirit of free intellectual inquiry. The moral effect of modern geological hypotheses, and of German exegesis, is felt in England long before Darwinism comes on the scene; and from 1830 to 1875 repeated shocks are shaking the fabric of traditional beliefs.

The consciousness of the average man is dimly aware of the conflict in progress, and intuitively comes to recognize that there is a danger threatening the fundamental reasons to live. The echo of this alarm is heard through the whole of Victorian literature. And as the historian and the naturalist appear to be the enemies of biblical teaching, all the representatives of the growing civilization of the day—economists, masters of industry, business men—are deemed the artisans of a hopeless and a joyless materialism. The breaking up of beliefs, the loss of cherished illusions, the end of all nobility and beauty, such are the various aspects of one and the same disaster, the fear of which is diversely obsessing the minds of those to whom feeling and imagination are essentials of life itself. They are sufficiently numerous, and their spiritual energy is active enough, to create powerful counter-movements in the religious, social, and aesthetic worlds, against the withering atmosphere of the order that is forcing itself upon them. This crisis in the life of many souls is intimately allied with the uneasy feeling roused by the unchecked development of an individualistic society. The destructive action of science, and of a material revolution, thus produces its inevitable effects as early as the middle years of the century; this rationalist age is all shaken by the echoing sounds of one impassioned protestation after another. Newman, Carlyle, and Ruskin, in conflict with the spirit of their time, introduce all the themes which fifty years later a new mysticism, then triumphant, will take up in the glad feeling of its own harmony with a deep stirring of thought, and with the turn of events themselves. The intellectual generation of Herbert Spencer, in its very nature, evinces this contradiction, and reveals this blending of elements.

It would be better, therefore, to define the tendencies of this age as the outcome of an essential duality of character, made up of so many elements that it would be impossible to bring

them under one principle. But no matter how different may be the precise quality of each, they still can be grouped round one common impulse, the most elementary of all: the search for stability, for balance; the desire to obey the laws of life [illegible] id during the [illegible] isciously and [illegible] which spon- [illegible] hich, wishing for the necessary compensation, intuitively knows where to find it. Indeed, the distinguishing feature of this age is to be found in its broader, more studied grasp of the conditions connected with its own stability.

The motive at the heart of the scientific, practical, and rationalist movement is a striving after balance by way of the intelligence; it is an eff [illegible] organize life and society, [illegible] mind draws from nature. [illegible] main philosophical current of these years shows clearly that it is immediately concerned with the betterment of both body [illegible]

period. In its view, a balance has already been realized, or is in process of realization through the spontaneous play of cosmic forces; an irresistible impulsion towards progress is at work. Through a cheap application of this method and of these conclusions, the general public find a superficial self-satisfaction in the mediocre compromise to which they cling

It is also a desire for balance which lies at the root of the interventionist movement, and of the revival of idealism, but here the more stable order wished for is one that can be realized only if founded upon sound psychological principles, [illegible]

powers of the soul their normal freedom, is accompanied by a keen sense of the evil which it must fight, and thus it introduces a strong wave of pessimism into the self-satisfied mood of the Victorian era.

These movements, opposed as they are, and despite the momentary excesses to which each may go, only counteract each other, and indeed offer no resistance to such counteraction, so

long as it is necessary for the safety and prosperity of the whole. It will be seen, therefore, that the search for balance is at once the most general and the most typical feature of this age, and one which permits its very varied aspects to be grouped together. And as this quest for equilibrium is rather like an orderly arrangement, a converging of means towards an end; as, moreover, in its new and accentuated form, it tends rather to be intellectual, or related to an instinct grown intellectual and conscious, it will be recognized that the rational elements of thought—the neo-classical elements in art—are indeed the most normal and central of the period; they it is that give it its distinctive character.

To be consulted: Benn, *Modern England*, 1908; McCarthy, *Short History of our Own Times*, new edition, 1907; Cazamian, *Modern England*, 1911; E. B. Chancellor, *Life in Regency and Early Victorian Times*, 1927; Chesterton, *The Victorian Age in Literature*, 1913; Chevrillon, *La Pensée de Ruskin*, 1909; J. H. Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain*, *1820-50*, 1926; Duncan, *Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer*, 1908; Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1830-80*, 1920; Halévy, *Histoire du peuple anglais au XIX^e siècle*, vol. iii, 1923; Low and Sanders, *Political History of England*, vol. xii, 1907; *Social England*, ed. by H. D. Traill, vol. vi (1815-85), 1898; Lytton Strachey, *Queen Victoria*, 1921; Walker, *The Literature of the Victorian Era*, 1910; G. M. Young, ed., *Early Victorian England*, 1934.

CHAPTER II

INTELLECTUALISM AND SCIENCE

the relatively
tively erecting
and where human life will henceforth try to find a shelter.

the proportion of original personalities and creative artists is greatest. On the other hand, the now easier diffusion of utilitarian principles is accompanied by an inner weakening of its fecundity as a theme. The writers who are its docile

Therefore it is not among the orthodox philosophical

Radicals, or the pure economists, that one must lo
most interesting figures in this vast movement;[1] b
among the thinkers and writers who preserve an i
attitude towards the doctrine; because being mo
free from any explicit adhesion to it, they have di
intellectual influence towards concrete problems, o
branches of knowledge, such as history, theology,

After the middle of the century, there appears a
more powerful expression of the desire to underst
exists, and reduce it to some sort of unity; a process
in the case of Darwin to the whole scale of living b
with Spencer, to the entire cosmos. The doctrine of
is an intellectual ferment, active and violent enoug
to inspire in its first apostles something of the creati
without which there is no real note of personality in
so, while they owe their place in the history of Englis
mainly to the energy they bring to their scientific
work which that effort has produced is not devoid
value.

2. *Philosophy: John Stuart Mill.*—John Stuart M
nected with the intellectualism of the Utilitarian

[1] The active supporters of utilitarianism in politics, when once t
electoral rights had been effected, turned their attention to the
trade. Richard Cobden (1804–65) and John Bright (1811–89) de
selves to the service of this cause and contributed in bringing about
the first by his sober and persuasive eloquence, the second by the
more moving tone of his oratory, charged, as it was, with a very
persuasiveness. Cobden, *Speeches*, 1870; see *Life* by Morley, 18
Speeches, 1878; see *Life* by Trevelyan, 1913.

[2] John Stuart Mill, son of James Mill (see above, Book v, Chap.
London in 1806, educated very systematically by his father, sh
ordinary precocity. Attached to the central service of the East In
(1823–58), he led, at first, a life wholly engrossed in study, against
ever, the needs of his sensibility reacted more and more, from 1
He wrote for Radical papers, and, above all, for the *Westminster R*
articles, a number of which were collected at a later date (*Diss*
Discussions, 4 vols., 1859–75). He published *A System of Logic*
Principles of Political Economy (1848). In 1851 he married Mrs.
brought a deep influence to bear upon his thought; she died in
gnon, and it was here, beside her last resting-place, that Mill spent h
years, save from 1865 to 1868, when he was a member of Parli
other publications include: *On Liberty* (1859), *Considerations on R*
Government (1861), *Utilitarianism* (1863), *Examination of S*
Hamilton's Philosophy (1865), *Auguste Comte and Positivism* (1
Subjection of Women (1869). He died in 1873, leaving an *Autobiog*
and *Three Essays on Religion* (1874). *Correspondance avec d'Ei*
Lettres à Auguste Comte, ed. by Lévy-Bruhl, 1899; *Letters*, ed. by
See Bain, *J. S. Mill*, 1882; Douglas, *J. S. Mill*, 1895; Sir L. S
English Utilitarians, vol. iii, 1900; Taine, *Le Positivisme angla*
Stuart Mill, 1864, incorporated in his *Littérature anglaise*, vol. v.

...iate descent, and by direct moral discipleship. He is the ...uct of an education which was entirely controlled by this ...rine; and he remains its most illustrious representative. ...his life and work bear the stamp of a dual character; and ... with him, in this stronghold of rational thought, do we ... that the influences of psychological Romanticism, which ...his time have become part and parcel of all minds, are ...ly felt.

...e was never disloyal to the duty of seeking truth by means ...eason. It was out of intellectual sincerity that he came to ...t, by the side of intelligence, other instruments of know... and action. He broadened the system of ideas, either too ...ow or too poor, which he had received from a school of ...ght to which he never ceased to belong. In imbuing ...nalism with feeling and flexibility, he believed that he was ...destroying it, but rather completing it. Whatever one ... think the theoretical success of this synthesis to have ..., it would be unfair not to recognize the stability and the ...ty of a character founded upon it.

...l developed at first along straight lines, the willing fol... of Bentham and of his father. Then came a crisis of ...rience, of which he has left us a clear account. His ...re, which had been artificially withered, thenceforth ex...ed in the fulness of its powers; and with the reality of ...ngs, there was borne in upon him the existence of new ...al shades. Thus was fertilized the germ of an inner ...ress, which had a decisive effect in modifying his thought. ...ead Wordsworth, became receptive to poetic suggestion, ...owledged the claims of the heart, and discovered in every... around him a concrete and unsuspected wealth. The ...rior merit of his philosophy is to be found in this much ... adaptation to an experience more objectively registered. ...was the first in England to perceive the essential conflict ...e tendencies between which his age was divided; and he ...p an antithesis, which the course of time has confirmed, ...een Bentham and Coleridge; between systematic intel...alism on the one hand, inherited from the eighteenth ...ury, and on the other the mysticism of intuition, which ...been revived during the Romantic era.

...l's work is great, and has not ceased to prove its fecundity. ... fruit of a nobly scrupulous thought, and of a meditative ...ncerity of heart, it looked forward boldly enough to keep ...ure of the future. It owes its worth to the urgency of its

...II

reasoning, but no less to its courage in facing difficult problems; to the sharpness of analysis, but no less to the realism of imagination.

As a logician, he invests a purely empirical theory of induction with the rigour of precise formulae; he unravels in a convincing manner the tangled paths which experience follows in order to draw ever-justified conclusions from the mere habits of things. It is upon facts, and facts alone, that science and the coherence of the universe are based; but the certitude thus evolved, fragile as it is when compared with our craving for the absolute, is illuminated with such vivid psychological light, and so strongly traced back to the actual processes of the mind, that a conviction grows irresistibly upon us: in no other manner has man put together, piecemeal and by much toil, the humble tutelary edifice which can satisfy his need for an order of things outside himself. Similarly, the metaphysician in Mill reconciles the imperious authority of that fact, the world of the senses, with the scepticism of abstract reflection, in a formula where the tradition of Berkeley commingles with all the positive instinct of British genius; namely, that matter is a 'permanent possibility of sensation.' Mind remains, as empiricism would have it, a more or less closely woven network of ideas and images, assembled by the laws of mental association; but if Mill severely criticizes the intuitive theory of Hamilton, he is not far from admitting that personality and memory imply the existence of a more organic relationship between the various elements of the ego.

As a moralist, Mill further develops the doctrine of utility, and does not believe that he violates its principle by seeking to infuse it with a finer meaning. Through a more exact exercise of the faculty of introspection he links up more closely the ethical thesis of Bentham with all the immemorial experiences which all religions have consecrated. What is happiness, he contends, but something which evaporates when sought after directly? The very constitution of the soul makes happiness dependent upon a mode of life occupied with other things. And in the range of pleasures there exist irreducible differences of quality; such pleasures, for example, as emanate from altruistic motives and from the highest human endeavours have a virtue that cannot be matched among those of the senses. Mill, in thus correcting what he understands to be a too elementary form of empiricism, does not as yet appeal to anything save experience; but in this experience was perhaps

t denial of the simple rule of intelligent

r, to the science of social life that he has de-
f his thought, so generous and yet ever in touch
[illegible] had, it seemed, definitively
[illegible]. But the
[illegible] a self-suffi-
[illegible]

[illegible]

ssary, then the uncompromisingness of a doc-
nally yield before the more sacred demands of

[illegible]

simple prose grows animated but rarely; still,
f mind and the sincerity of heart which are
[illegible]

an-
and
of
n the eighteenth century had already given a
ch, begins to evolve under an influence, in this
[illegible]

[illegible]

on of the causes which may account for the
f peoples [illegible]

reasoning, but no less to its courage in facing difficult problems; to the sharpness of analysis, but no less to the realism of imagination.

As a logician, he invests a purely empirical theory of induction with the rigour of precise formulae; he unravels in a convincing manner the tangled paths which experience follows in order to draw ever-justified conclusions from the mere habits of things. It is upon facts, and facts alone, that science and the coherence of the universe are based; but the certitude thus evolved, fragile as it is when compared with our craving for the absolute, is illuminated with such vivid psychological light, and so strongly traced back to the actual processes of the mind, that a conviction grows irresistibly upon us: in no other manner has man put together, piecemeal and by much toi the humble tutelary edifice which can satisfy his need for a order of things outside himself. Similarly, the metaphysician in Mill reconciles the imperious authority of that fact, the world of the senses, with the scepticism of abstract reflection, in a formula where the tradition of Berkeley commingles with all the positive instinct of British genius; namely, that matter is a 'permanent possibility of sensation.' Mind remains, as empiricism would have it, a more or less closely woven network of ideas and images, assembled by the laws of mental association; but if Mill severely criticizes the intuitive theory of Hamilton, he is not far from admitting that personality and memory imply the existence of a more organic relationship between the various elements of the ego.

As a moralist, Mill further develops the doctrine of utility, and does not believe that he violates its principle by seeking to infuse it with a finer meaning. Through a more exact exercise of the faculty of introspection he links up more closely the ethical thesis of Bentham with all the immemorial experiences which all religions have consecrated. What is happiness, he contends, but something which evaporates when sought after directly? The very constitution of the soul mak appiness dependent upon a mode of life occupied with oth hings. And in the range of pleasures there exist irreducib fferences of quality; such pleasures, for example, as emanat om altruistic motives and from the highest human endeav rs have a virtue that cannot be matched among those o senses. Mill, in thus correcting what he understands to a too elementary form of empiricism, does not as yet appeal nything save experience; but in this experience was perhaps

implied a direct denial of the simple rule of intelligent egoism.

It is, however, to the science of social life that he has de-
[illegible]

cient principle; it must be defined, and must be combined in an organic whole with the limits imposed by social life. The law of majorities is not a perfect expression of justice in a democratic state; more supple modes will have to be found in order to represent all shades of opinion. Every fully conscious being has the right to share in the government of all by all; [illegible] lmitted into the pale [illegible] should be no longer [illegible] which binds up the maximum of production with the greatest independence of the productive agents; it should purpose as well to study, and to improve, the distribution of wealth; and if in this domain the intervention of the State, as the organ of collective interests, were necessary, then the uncompromisingness of a doctrine should finally yield before the more sacred demands of life.

This austere soul thus had in it something of the sweetness of charity. Mill's highly intellectual figure is endued with the warm glow of a moral radiation to be felt even in his work. His clear and simple prose grows animated but rarely; still, the honesty of mind and the sincerity of heart which are revealed in it imbue it with a sober charm.

3. *History: Macaulay, Buckle, Lecky, etc.*—After Romanticism has quickened men's interest in national origins and revived the cult of the past, the modern idea of history, of which Hume in the eighteenth century had already given a very able sketch, begins to evolve under an influence, in this case complementary and not antagonistic: that of an age when science deliberately undertakes the complete study of the facts relating to man. Utilitarian rationalism counts for much in the formation of an atmosphere that is favourable to the examination of the causes which may account for the development of peoples; as a doctrine, it is permeated by the spirit of determinism; the idea that the sphere of individual actions is not outside the control of general laws, but is subject to certain exterior necessities, lies at the root of a diffused

hich savours of system. In the growth of Macaulay
... ...ce of utilitaria
which it did n
to it a taste f
to some degre
ity, of progres
he natural gif
lear intelligenc
influence endowed him with a faculty of constructio
ch links him up in a remarkable way with writers of th
ach type.

e has a deeper and more fundamental notion of order tha
ruth. To him truth is before all to be found in order; an
vith him the man of letters and the artist are superior t
historian. His main concern is by no means the anxiou
ch after the exact shade, nor is it a scrupulous reverenc
facts, nor even the care of documentation; but after h
d has gathered a general impression, and formed a thesi
ough an inner process of elaboration more intuitive tha
precise, then does he concentrate all the vigour of h
nt to uphold this cause. And behind the advocate ther
man, with strongly preconceived and unalterable idea
ch he obeys without any real struggle He believes tha
first duty of history is to teach; therefore he teaches; an
general doctrine espouses with astonishing fidelity th
tours of the moral and political faith which would b
t of an eminent contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*.
his intrusion of the writer's personality in his work is t
ertain extent inevitable; and only at the expense of a ver
the past, as
actice, or giv
unconsciousne
ds Macaulay scope for animation, oratorical delights, an
varmth of dramatic narration. If he is no longer co

general public.

Too much should not be made of Macaulay's recognitic
and profession of the likeness between his own art and that
the novelist; his imagination, if it is not completely dominate

by the search for pure truth, at least serves it with gr success and in original ways. In the sifting of documents in the citation of sources he does not show the meticul accuracy of modern technique; but, on the other hand, mind is awake to the value of concrete testimony, and he l the intuitive sense of it; he shows a familiarity with atmosphere, the intimate life, the picturesque setting of epoch, that is greater and more solid, just as the picture which he traces it all is more detailed and instructive, th has ever been the case before him. He knows how to rev customs, and surround events and people with the influen which help us to understand them; and he can also penetr character, and interpret it as a master of historical psycl logy, so long as the limits of his nature do not narrow sympathy. To sum up, he has moulded together in a sy thesis, incomplete certainly but broad enough, along with ancient ideal of moving and didactic history, the evocat manner of a Scott, and that more positive notion of soc causes which forms, after the contribution of Romanticis the new progress of the science of the past.

His errors and his weak points have been emphasized w a severity often excessive. Looked upon as the artistic construction of an age—the transition from the seventeenth the eighteenth century in England—his *History* retains permanent value. But his *Essays*, where the severe attent to method is less needed, and where he enjoys more fully sense of a free scope, possess equal qualities, and do not themselves open to the same criticism. The trend of thou throughout their pages is very similar to that of the *Histo* very often in their choice of subject, and almost always their style, they play the dual part of literary exercises a historical studies. Literature here is interwoven with li and the individual reinstated in his epoch. The substa of the *Essays* is thinner, and in certain cases has been fou to be inconsistent; they have their defects of injustice superficiality; but in compensation, when the theme suits temperament of the author, then their merits are striki and even when the reader's satisfaction is not unmixed, he derives a very great pleasure from their pages. They gl with a brilliance that is the outcome of the sincere inter taken by a cultivated, generalizing, and eloquent mind in pageant of human life; their merit is also due to the sl which can throw into relief the characteristics and contra

of facts and of souls; finally, and above all, they owe most to the style, fluent, clear, and yet enhanced by individual touches, skilful antitheses, and sparkling epigrams; at one time periodic, at another condensed into short and pithy sentences; clever enough to display flexibility and variety, yet lacking the absolute simplicity and naturalness which could relieve it from a suspicion of artifice, grandiloquence, or occasional lapses from good taste.

Macaulay has paid very dearly for his too perfect harmony with an age which acclaimed his talent, but never stressed its relativity. As was said even during Victorian times, he has too much assurance, is too infallibly dogmatic in his ways of thinking and feeling, and further, is not [illegible] His *bourgeois* intellectual [illegible] outlook, as soon as a revo[illegible] faction of a progress whic[illegible] His merits, however, hav[illegible] reaction; and his name is [illegible] associated with an attractive and, at the same time, reliable interpretation of certain aspects of the nation's history.

The unfinished but very significant work of Buckle[1] establishes the closest and the most direct contact between history and philosophic rationalism. While he accepts and, indeed, goes beyond the point of view of the English Utilitarians, Buckle adopts the more ample [illegible] the teaching of [illegible], Buckle finds the influences of the physical surroundings and of the climate at the very core of the succession of historical periods. But nature is by no means the sole agent of formation in the life of mankind, through its stimuli it gives birth to intelligence, and this, more than moral conscience, is the active force which, in turn, modifies reality, and with the progress of science increases the power of man over the universe. The ambition and, in some measure, the method of sociological history are thus defined, and applied

[1] Henry Thomas Buckle, born in Kent in 1821, of middle-class family, was educated privately; possessing independent means, he travelled, was influenced by Liberal ideas and by Comte; prepared himself by deep study for his great work, *History of Civilisation in England*, 1857–61, which his premature death in 1862 left unfinished. See J. M. Robertson, *Buckle and his Critics*, 1895.

by the search for pure truth, at least serves it with gr success and in original ways. In the sifting of documents in the citation of sources he does not show the meticul accuracy of modern technique; but, on the other hand, mind is awake to the value of concrete testimony, and he the intuitive sense of it; he shows a familiarity with atmosphere, the intimate life, the picturesque setting of epoch, that is greater and more solid, just as the picture which he traces it all is more detailed and instructive, t has ever been the case before him. He knows how to rev customs, and surround events and people with the influen which help us to understand them; and he can also penetr character, and interpret it as a master of historical psyc logy, so long as the limits of his nature do not narrow sympathy. To sum up, he has moulded together in a s thesis, incomplete certainly but broad enough, along with ancient ideal of moving and didactic history, the evocat manner of a Scott, and that more positive notion of so causes which forms, after the contribution of Romantici the new progress of the science of the past.

His errors and his weak points have been emphasized w a severity often excessive. Looked upon as the artistic construction of an age—the transition from the seventeenth the eighteenth century in England—his *History* retain permanent value. But his *Essays*, where the severe attent to method is less needed, and where he enjoys more fully sense of a free scope, possess equal qualities, and do not themselves open to the same criticism. The trend of thou throughout their pages is very similar to that of the *Histo* very often in their choice of subject, and almost always their style, they play the dual part of literary exercises historical studies. Literature here is interwoven with l and the individual reinstated in his epoch. The substa of the *Essays* is thinner, and in certain cases has been fou to be inconsistent; they have their defects of injustice superficiality; but in compensation, when the theme suits temperament of the author, then their merits are striki and even when the reader's satisfaction is not unmixed, he derives a very great pleasure from their pages. They g with a brilliance that is the outcome of the sincere inter taken by a cultivated, generalizing, and eloquent mind in pageant of human life; their merit is also due to the s which can throw into relief the characteristics and contra

to examples—certain aspects of France and Scotland—as the preface to a more complete study of modern English civilization. The boldness of this tentative effort to explain, by material conditions, the spiritual originality of a people, but also to seek in its ideas the mainspring of its social life, and, again, the great success this effort met with, go to show in what direction the deep movement of thought is progressing, even before the appearance of the evolution theory. The ambition of Buckle bears some analogy to that of Taine.

As is frequently the case in England, Buckle was the disciple of no master, but formed his views through the instincts of a strong intelligence. He worked upon material brought together by a personal faculty of assimilation. His erudition has not the thoroughness needed for such an enterprise. His clear style, animated by a warm demonstrative zeal, lacks attention to detail; there is nothing artistic about it. But the value of the work lies in the energy of the main conception, in the philosophic divination therein displayed; and in the imaginative grasp of the relationships between the most diverse elements of concrete reality, or of the world of science.

It is less easy to assign a place to Froude[1] among the thinkers of his time, grouped as they are round two distinct intellectual poles. On the one hand he is strongly influenced y rationalism; he gives up the traditional forms of faith, and th his breaking away from the Church comes a deep-felt sis in his life. But, on the other hand, is he not the disciple Carlyle, after having been for a brief spell that of Newman? moral nature has a vein of ardour and passion; whatever se he takes up is invested with the accent of personality; growing religion of the Empire stirs and exalts him. A le part of his nature is critical and clear-sighted, while her is imaginative and emotive. A divided soul, he knew

nes Anthony Froude, born in 1818 in Devon, the son of an Anglican studied at Oxford, took orders; but renouncing orthodoxy, he left his nents and devoted himself to literature. After publishing two anony- orks (*Shadows of the Clouds*, 1847; *The Nemesis of Faith*, 1848), he the philosophy of Carlyle, collaborated in Radical reviews (articles l in 4 vols., *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, 1867–83), edited *Fraser's e* (1860–74), published *A History of England from the Fall of Wolsey feat of the Spanish Armada*, 1856–70; *The English in Ireland in the h Century*, 1872–4; *Caesar*, 1879; chosen by Carlyle as his biographer, eted the task in 4 vols. (1882–4), a work which raised violent con- *Oceana* (1886) and *The West Indies* (1888) combined travel impres- political opinions. Elected to a professorship at Oxford in 1892, ned various other historical works, and died in 1894. See Paul, *ude*, 1905; Leslie Stephen, *Studies of a Biographer*, vol. iii, 1902.

...est. He gave himself up to the cold discipline of historical search, but used it as the instrument for his prejudices; as e biographer of his master Carlyle, he made the idol the ject of a ruthless search for cruel truths; and behind this rch there is the faint suspicion that the writer is secretly iving after dramatic effect.

Judged from his work as a whole, he was mistaken when he cied he devoted himself to the severe meth... hought. There ... ret in the c... of self w... ...tian of land or as ... he has relied upon intuition for essential certitudes. Many others have done the same, no doubt, the greatest historians among them. He has rised control over his intuitions, and thrown light upon as best possible; he was aware of the value of docu-s and archives, and was not averse to utilizing the... to them for support and ... tory whose real ob... s into greater reli... not his weak

But his preferences are strong, and he makes no pt to conceal them, they bear upon vital points in al or religious history, what he reveals of Carlyle's e life is painful; as if he were predest... st, he alw... an atn... indulg... s his m... ...an objective way been posed, but also his incapability of quoting documents y.

inexactitude comes as a revelation In spite of his s effort, the outcome of honest intention, Froude is d and swayed more by the character and possible of things, than by the abstract mystery of their truth. The lapses in his material attention ... no other cause ...

... ...ry, the value of his ...ating constructions, in which the past is according to the law of a strong personality The Froude retains its vital interest, it is saved ... y the inquiring nature of ...

judgment; it is still alive with the stir of our contemporary problems, which Froude often transposed, as it were, into another age. It has variety, and touches upon many subjects, with a fertility of thought that is occasionally diffuse; its style, easy, animated, and picturesque, has gained for it many readers. The philosophy which it teaches is not original; its favourite themes are the ordered arrangement of centuries round the figures of great men, the fecundity of heroic energy during the great crises of mankind, the presence of a providential destiny behind momentous issues; it was none other than the doctrine which Carlyle was continually preaching. But Froude develops and illustrates it, in the tone of a more simple, less fiercely strained exposition; he thus has popularized, along with the feeling of history and the taste for it, some of the sentiments which have gone to form the moralizing imperialism of modern England.

Considered as historians, Froude and Freeman [1] have more than one trait in common, which the difference of their natures cannot obliterate. With the one, as with the other, the study of the past is wholly enlivened by the obsession of the present. Freeman has still less concentration than his rival, while he lacks the other's gifts of philosophy and irony. He is even more carried away by a more undisguised passion, whether it be political zeal or patriotism. The literary interest of his work is second-rate; and its technical value is more or less questioned, according to the various fortunes of the thesis which is still associated with his name: the Germanic origin of English institutions. This work remains very representative; it is one of the signs, and was one of the means, of the formation of a keener historical consciousness, which points, in Victorian England, to the growth of a surer and more dogmatic self-assertion. The influence of this mood prolongs the action of Romanticism, and tends to support in principle the opposition of British genius to Latin culture.

Lecky,[2] on the contrary, is of the rationalist school of

[1] Edward Augustus Freeman, born in 1823, studied at Oxford, where he first lived as an independent man of letters, then lectured on history from 1884 until his death in 1892. His publications were many, and include: *A History of Architecture*, 1849; *The History of Federal Government*, 1865; *The History of the Norman Conquests of England*, 1867–79; *The Historical Geography of Europe*, 1881; *The Reign of William Rufus*, 1882, etc. See Stephens, *Life and Letters of Freeman*, 1895.

[2] William Edward Hartpole Lecky (1838–1903), born in Dublin: *The Leaders of Public Opinion in Ireland*, 1861; *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, 1865; *History of European Morals from*

Gibbon and Buckle. He writes history in the light of a central psychological fact, the decisive advent of the notion [illegible] of eighteenth-century French philosophy that is again taken up, and put forth in a spirit of even greater audacity; and thus, for the Victorian age—or, at least, for what is most characteristic in it—this effort of reason by which the moral [illegible] which had been interrupted for a brief spell by the triumph of Romanticism.

Lecky's mind has been fashioned in the school of this new mental outlook, which calls for a satisfactory linking-up of the various terms of an historical whole, and of all material and spiritual facts—an outlook that is the peculiar attribute [illegible]

[illegible] in thought as it is calm in outlook It is not altogether devoid of feeling, as is proved, among other examples, by the sympathetic interest it evinces in Ireland Despite the abstract nature of its more analytical pages, it retains something of the full flavour of reality. But it has not the close, fine grain of true literature; and its form does not entirely answer the [illegible]

[illegible] the nineteenth century are to witness the extinction of the race of historians who are also great writers For a time, the craving for documentary evidence, the suppression of anything suggestive of personal judgment, the distrust of intuitive imagination, the fear of all utterances too intense to be safe and discriminating, all go to make historical narrative, first and foremost, a work of technique, careless of artistic beauty, and, indeed, prone to exorcise its maleficent spell In

Augustus to Charlemagne, 1869, *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* 1878–90; *Democracy and Liberty*, 1896, *The Map of Life*, 1899 See *Memoir* by his wife, 1909.

ngland as elsewhere, history as a science then turns away from
e general reader, to whom it has hitherto addressed itself. A
eavage takes place between the scientist, on the one hand, who
borates knowledge, and does not seek to invest it with a
re human interest; and on the other hand the popularizer,
o spreads it abroad, and who, in the full consciousness of the
riority of his task, is more willingly content with mediocrity.
still happens, however, that the particular quality of a
er's mind will raise the diffusion of knowledge to the
s of the literature of personal expression. The perma-
success of Green's *History of the English People* [1] is due
e radiating power of an impassioned feeling, which asso-
l the humblest actors in the drama with the destiny of
ountry. In fact, the sentiment of the universal soli-
on which a nation is built, and what might be called
ial type of imagination, are in the present instance new
of truth; they add original resources to the traditional
of history.
l also happen that the specialist, who is, as it were, the
in his special province of historical study, possesses
essary vigour to combine his conclusions into a well-
synthesis (the *Constitutional History* of Stubbs [2] offers
xample of this); or that the scrupulous honesty of a
an give to his pages a kind of austere but contagious
that the love for truth, brought to bear on the story
ic events, leaves them much of their power to stir
ation of the reader, as with Gardiner,[3] the historian
l War; or, finally, there is the example of a scholar
ged in the study of charters, and most anxious to
n the limits of documentary precision, still has
fresh spring of vitality, a faculty of sympathetic
l manages soberly to combine into one creative
joy of literary sensitiveness and the keen legal
of the past.[4]

d Green (1837–83): *A Short History of the English People*, 1874;
nglish People, 1878–80; *The Making of England*, 1882; *The*
and, 1883.
obs (1825–1901): *The Constitutional History of England in its*
opment, 1874–8.
on Gardiner (1829–1902): *A History of England from the*
s I to the Outbreak of the Civil War, 1883–4; *History of the*
886–91; *History of the Commonwealth and Protectorate* (unfin-
iam Maitland (1850–1906): *History of English Law before the*
(with Sir F. Pollock), 1893; *Domesday Book and Beyond*,
d Borough, 1898, etc.

4. *Liberalism in Religion.*—The scientific spirit, widening its hold on the realities of moral life, now reaches the field of religious ideas. It brings with it a menace, or a principle of transformation. From 1830 onwards, the struggle becomes more apparent between science and traditional theology. In this trial, belief sometimes seems to be overcome; the faith of many is shaken; and many have to break away, not without an inner disruption, from the fold of the Church. At the same time, others in greater numbers make the necessary sacrifices to the spirit of free inquiry, and reconcile former assertions with new formulae. With nearly all, this crisis, the gravest which can assail the conscience of man, stirs up a feeling of deep uneasiness, the direct or distant effects of which are widely reflected in the moral life of the whole age.

Under the pressure of an opinion which is still very homogeneous, scepticism, in the middle years of the Victorian era, is almost always silent, it retires, as it were, from view, or if it shows itself, it is in another guise. When after 1860 comes the open profession of absolute free-thinking, it raises a [illegible]

at once the bitter tone of certain fears, and also the strength of certain reactions. Towards the end of the period, philosophical doubters, the self-restraint of the human mind giving up the endeavour to reach the first cause of things, describe themselves by a new name, the subdued aggressiveness of which does not disarm the prejudice of believers[2]

The liberal movement within the Anglican Church itself has quite another aim in view, even if the results do not always go [illegible]

free believer, he interprets the Scriptures according to his intuitive sense of their moral fruitfulness, and does not seek after any surer proof of their authority[3] This mystical mood is rather foreign to the more dryly lucid thought of an intellectual group who at Oxford, about 1830, are endeavouring to

[1] See the *Life of Charles Bradlaugh* by his daughter, 1894

[2] The word 'agnostic' was coined by Huxley in 1869 See *An Agnostic's Apology*, by Leslie Stephen, 1893

[3] See above Book V Chap I sect 3.

introduce greater elasticity into the belief in biblical inspiration, and to bring it into the category of relative values. This attempt comes as a shock to the instincts of the average believer, and even to the liberal type of churchman. Those thinkers[1] consider the religious problem as an object of pure science. Their effort results in a reaction; and the 'Oxford Movement,' or 'Catholic Revival,' springs from the spirit of opposition which they arouse.

Their immediate disciples, to whom public opinion is more tolerant, organize the critical tendencies with a living body of eager and glowing affirmations. They give doubt an inner impulse not towards negation, but towards faith; a moral faith with a Thomas Arnold and a Robertson, a social one with a Maurice and a Kingsley.[2]

The methods and conclusions of the German exegetists, meanwhile, are exercising a growing influence in England; their principal works are made better known through translations.[3] Shortly after 1850, a whole group of thinkers is formed who regard those works as authoritative, or, at least, seek therein the general themes of their inspiration. The influence of science, and that of liberal theology, are combined in the minds of the supporters of this somewhat shifting spirit, whose central aim is to reconcile independence of thought with belief. The 'Broad Church'[4] is essentially tolerant; it accepts or tries to promote the co-operation of different religions and nationalities; it tends to qualify or eliminate dogma, reduces the part of the supernatural to a minimum, or replaces it by the inexplicable phenomena of psychology; it emphasizes what can bring all men of goodwill together: the feeling of human solidarity and the practice of duty. This attitude, which varies from a philosophical Christianity to a faith purely human, in its more extreme forms rejoins the agnosticism of the sceptics. It contributes to pervade the intellectual atmosphere with an element of doubt; and to spread

[1] The most noteworthy are Richard Whately and Renn Dickson Hampden.

[2] Thomas Arnold, 1775–1842; see study by R. J. Campbell, 1927; by A. Whitridge, 1928. Frederick William Robertson, 1816–53. Frederick Denison Maurice, 1805–72: *The Kingdom of Christ*, 1837; *The Religions of the World*, 1847. For Kingsley, see later, Chap. III, sect. 3.

[3] Julius Hare and Connop Thirlwall translated Schleiermacher: *A Critical Essay on the Gospel of St. Luke*, 1825. George Eliot translated Strauss (*Life of Jesus*, 1846) and Feuerbach (*Essence of Christianity*, 1854).

[4] The expression 'Broad Church' was proposed by A. H. Clough, employed by Stanley in 1850, while in 1853 it was looked upon as an accepted term.

further an impression that reason is gradually gaining the victory over the irrational demands of the will to believe.[1]

5. *Moral and Literary Criticism: Matthew Arnold.*—More definitely than any English writer before him, Matthew Arnold[2] based his work and his life upon the intellectual principle of criticism. Professional philosophers, such as Hume, had put every idea, and some social facts, to the test of a severe examination. But, as yet, no one had studied from the psychological point of view the very attitude of the national mind, the focus, as it were, from which all the various ways and habits of the British people radiate out; and, discovering the radical weakness in the clear realization of self, had endeavoured by persistent and multiple effort to diffuse self-knowledge, from that centre, over every field of thought and action. This was Arnold's mission, and in it his personality takes on its distinctive character. The poet in him, although intimately associated with the critic, does not work in complete unison with him; he confesses the anguish of a courageous thought; he avows the melancholy which mingles with the clear-sightedness of the modern mind; he reveals a more complex and more attractive sensibility than that of the critic; he is, in many ways, nearer to our own age. He will probably better stand the test of time.[3] But in the history of literature, as in that of ideas, Arnold the prose writer is a more

[1] The principal figures in this movement are Benjamin Jowett, 1817–93, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, 1815–81, Mark Pattison, 1813–84. The main epi[illegible]

[illegible]

1849, *Empedocles on Etna*, 1852, two series of *Poems* (1853–5), and a tragedy in verse, *Merope* (1858). The *New Poems* of 1867 included a few additions but only in the nature of short pieces. After a mission to the Continent to study pedagogical systems he wrote *The Popular Education of France*, etc., 1861, *A French Eton*, 1864, *Schools and Universities on the Continent*, 1868. Appointed to the chair of poetry at Oxford, he published several works of criticism: *On Translating Homer*, 1861, *Essays in Criticism*, 1865 (idem, second series, 1888), *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, 1867. The last phase of his life was devoted to the criticism of society (*Culture and Anarchy*, 1869), and of religion in England (*St Paul and Protestantism*, 1870, *Literature and Dogma*, 1873, *God and the Bible*, 1875, *Last Essays on Church and Religion*, 1877). He died in 1888. *Poems*, 1840–67, Oxford ed., 1909, *Works*, ed. de luxe, 1904; *Letters*, ed. by Russell, 1901. See the studies or biographies of Saintsbury, 1899, Paul (English Men of Letters), 1902, Dawson, *Matthew Arnold and his Relation to the Thought of his Time*, 1904, Dickey, *Matthew Arnold and his Poetry*, 1911, Hugh Kingsmill, *Matthew Arnold*, 1928, L. Trilling, *Matthew Arnold*, 1939.

[3] For the poet in Arnold, see Chap. VI, sect. 6.

commanding figure; he has exercised a wider influence. He has been in the broadest sense the preacher of the doctrine of intellectual culture, to a civilization mainly satisfied with the success of empirical ambitions.

To preach upon the text of intelligence is a ticklish task for a man of parts to undertake. It demands a dexterous touch. Arnold is not always free from a shade of priggishness. His magistral authority was at times too sure of itself; the more so, as he does not on all occasions follow out his own principle to the end. He wants the activity of the mind to play freely round all habits and beliefs, and to accept no values unless they have been revised. This current of critical thought bathing the dim unconscious recesses of the soul, and restoring its spontaneous freshness to all the inner personality of man, this spirit of calm self-possession, remind us of the teaching of the Greeks, and of that of Goethe. The wisdom which Arnold thus invokes is elevating and beautiful. He has lived up to it to the utmost of his ability, and has given attractive examples of his faith. Still, he has not risen at all points to the height of his own ideal. Prejudices, narrowness of outlook, passive ways of thinking, have limited or warped his mental perspective in certain directions. His social and moral philosophy is at once bold and timorous. He was unconscious of the fact that in many respects he could not and did not vant to see clearly. Yet his outlook is none the less honest nd frank, and often proves very penetrating.

Arnold as a literary critic has clearly defined doctrines, a ale of merits founded in principle. With him a new school ay be said to begin. None of his predecessors has had such coherent set of ideas, nor have they applied or explained ir views with so elegant a precision. The profound desire his age to return to a standard of beauty which reason can nprehend, and whose form reason can control, is revealed of all in the effort of Arnold to renew classical tradition, se it on the now better understood example of the ancients, at of the moderns as well, wherever the latter have sought spect the sense of balance, so essential a gesture of art. full of antiquity—above all of the Greek models—but, on her hand, he appreciates and he loves French measure btlety. The knowledge that England possesses to-day original genius of France has been gleaned partly from . He judges books as one trained to take account of onstruction, and of the finer shades of their style. His

judgments, however, are subject to whims. He depends more than he thinks upon his intuitive sympathies; and these with Arnold are sometimes at fault—as in the case of Shelley—or evince a very imperfect sense of the true proportions of their objects. He is not anxious enough, either, to submit to the discipline of study; his method at times savours of improvisation. But he has written of Homer better than any of his contemporaries, his theory of the Celtic spirit, however adventurous it may be, has been [illegible] in his [illegible] [illegible] merits of a [illegible]

The newest and strongest [illegible] iticism is that [illegible] He believes [illegible] The English [illegible] middle class are 'Philistines', while the people are a 'populace', and thus these three classes suffer in diverse ways, and to different degrees, through an underestimation of spiritual values. This arises from the fact that in the secular struggle waged between the powers making for intellectual liberty—'Hellenism'—and those advocating moral discipline—'Hebraism'—the English nation has taken sides with the latter, so that the exclusive preoccupation of conduct has withered up souls which are being lost in their eagerness for salvation. The need of England is to seek for the refinement of culture, the 'sweetness' of a 'light' which shines only for the [illegible] [illegible] value [illegible] ot carried his analysis to [illegible] About the same period, [illegible] ularly more vigorous doc[illegible], does not lack strength, [illegible] although he is indebted to Goethe for the principle of it, he proceeds to apply it to his compatriots in a way that is indeed revealing.

From the criticism of manners Arnold passes by a natural transition to that of religion. In matters biblical he cannot lay claim to any particular competence, and his adversaries have not failed to reproach him with it Though he lacks the authority necessary to solve exegetical problems, he

commanding figure; he has exercised a wider influe has been in the broadest sense the preacher of the do intellectual culture, to a civilization mainly satisfied success of empirical ambitions.

To preach upon the text of intelligence is a ticklish a man of parts to undertake. It demands a dexterou Arnold is not always free from a shade of priggishn magistral authority was at times too sure of itself; so, as he does not on all occasions follow out his own to the end. He wants the activity of the mind to pl round all habits and beliefs, and to accept no valu they have been revised. This current of critical bathing the dim unconscious recesses of the soul, and its spontaneous freshness to all the inner personality this spirit of calm self-possession, remind us of the of the Greeks, and of that of Goethe. The wisdo Arnold thus invokes is elevating and beautiful. He up to it to the utmost of his ability, and has given a examples of his faith. Still, he has not risen at all the height of his own ideal. Prejudices, narrownes look, passive ways of thinking, have limited or wa mental perspective in certain directions. His social a philosophy is at once bold and timorous. He was un of the fact that in many respects he could not and want to see clearly. Yet his outlook is none the le and frank, and often proves very penetrating.

Arnold as a literary critic has clearly defined doc scale of merits founded in principle. With him a ne may be said to begin. None of his predecessors has a coherent set of ideas, nor have they applied or c their views with so elegant a precision. The profou of this age to return to a standard of beauty which re comprehend, and whose form reason can control, is best of all in the effort of Arnold to renew classical t to base it on the now better understood example of the on that of the moderns as well, wherever the latter hav to respect the sense of balance, so essential a gestu He is full of antiquity—above all of the Greek models- the other hand, he appreciates and he loves French and subtlety. The knowledge that England possess of the original genius of France has been gleaned pa Arnold. He judges books as one trained to take ac their construction, and of the finer shades of their st

judgments, however, are subject to whims. He depends more than he thinks upon his intuitive sympathies; and these with Arnold are sometimes at fault—as in the case of Shelley—or evince a very imperfect sense of the true proportions of their objects. He is not anxious enough, either, to submit to the discipline of study; his method at times savours of improvisation. But he has written of Homer better than any of his contemporaries; his theory of the Celtic spirit, however adventurous it may be, has been fruitful; the preferences implied in his admirations disclose a personal temperament, at once orthodox and capable of initiative. Finally, he defends his taste with a lucidity of expression and an easy eloquence which surpass Macaulay by far, and are in themselves merits of a high order.

aristocracy is 'barbarian' to him, the middle class are 'Philistines,' while the people are a 'populace', and thus these three classes suffer in diverse ways, and to different degrees, through an underestimation of spiritual values. This arises from the fact that in the secular struggle waged between the powers making for intellectual liberty—'Hellenism'—and those advocating moral discipline—'Hebraism'—the English nation has taken sides with the latter, so that the exclusive preoccu-

Arnold has felt the hard utilitarian element that is to be found in a certain kind of moral obsession, he has felt the virtue of disinterestedness, but he has not carried his analysis to its ultimate psychological elements About the same period, Nietzsche was working out a singularly more vigorous doctrine. Arnold's criticism, however, does not lack strength,

principle of it,

a way that is

es by a natural transition to that of religion. In matters biblical he cannot lay claim to any particular competence, and his adversaries have not failed to reproach him with it. Though he lacks the authority necessary to solve exegetical problems, he

commanding figure; he has exercised a wider influence. He has been in the broadest sense the preacher of the doctrine of intellectual culture, to a civilization mainly satisfied with the success of empirical ambitions.

To preach upon the text of intelligence is a ticklish task for a man of parts to undertake. It demands a dexterous touch. Arnold is not always free from a shade of priggishness. His magistral authority was at times too sure of itself; the more so, as he does not on all occasions follow out his own principle to the end. He wants the activity of the mind to play freely round all habits and beliefs, and to accept no values unless they have been revised. This current of critical thought bathing the dim unconscious recesses of the soul, and restoring its spontaneous freshness to all the inner personality of man, this spirit of calm self-possession, remind us of the teaching of the Greeks, and of that of Goethe. The wisdom which Arnold thus invokes is elevating and beautiful. He has lived up to it to the utmost of his ability, and has given attractive examples of his faith. Still, he has not risen at all points to the height of his own ideal. Prejudices, narrowness of outlook, passive ways of thinking, have limited or warped his mental perspective in certain directions. His social and moral philosophy is at once bold and timorous. He was unconscious of the fact that in many respects he could not and did not want to see clearly. Yet his outlook is none the less honest and frank, and often proves very penetrating.

Arnold as a literary critic has clearly defined doctrines, a cale of merits founded in principle. With him a new school ay be said to begin. None of his predecessors has had such coherent set of ideas, nor have they applied or explained eir views with so elegant a precision. The profound desire this age to return to a standard of beauty which reason can nprehend, and whose form reason can control, is revealed t of all in the effort of Arnold to renew classical tradition, ase it on the now better understood example of the ancients, hat of the moderns as well, wherever the latter have sought espect the sense of balance, so essential a gesture of art. s full of antiquity—above all of the Greek models—but, on other hand, he appreciates and he loves French measure ubtlety. The knowledge that England possesses to-day e original genius of France has been gleaned partly from d. He judges books as one trained to take account of onstruction, and of the finer shades of their style. His

judgments, however, are subject to whims. He depends more than he thinks upon his intuitive sympathies; and these with Arnold are sometimes at fault—as in the case of Shelley—or evince a very imperfect sense of the true proportions of their objects. He is not anxious enough, either, to submit to the discipline of study; his method at times savours of improvisation. But he has written of Homer better than any of his contemporaries, his theory of the Celtic spirit, however adventurous it may be, has been fruitful; the preferences implied in his admirations disclose a personal temperament, at once orthodox and capable of initiative. Finally, he defends his taste with a lucidity of expression and an easy eloquence which surpass Macaulay by far, and are in themselves merits of a high order.

[illegible] iticism is that [illegible] He believes [illegible] The English aristocracy is 'barbarian' to him, the middle class are 'Philistines,' while the people are a 'populace', and thus these three classes suffer in diverse ways, and to different degrees, through an underestimation of spiritual values. This arises from the fact that in the secular struggle waged between the powers making for intellectual liberty—'Hellenism'—and those advocating moral discipline—'Hebraism'—the English nation has taken sides with the latter, so that the exclusive preoccupation [illegible]
in their [illegible]
seek fo [illegible]
which shines only for the beauty of the radiance it sheds. Arnold has felt the hard utilitarian element that is to be found in a certain kind of moral obsession, he has felt the virtue of disinterestedness, but he has not carried his analysis to its ultimate psychological elements About the same period, Nietzsche was working out a singularly more vigorous doctrine. Arnold's criticism, however, does not lack strength, [illegible]

lay claim to any particular competence, and his adversaries have not failed to reproach him with it. Though he lacks the authority necessary to solve exegetical problems, he

extends to the domain of religious beliefs the
illuminating common sense, sharpened by inn
Although the line of his thought does not exactl
the central direction of the Rationalist moveme
the reserves he arrays against the modern ambit
he really continues the effort of liberal theol
of dogma, and of the definite inspiration of the
substitutes a kind of general philosophy, whic
into accord with all the creative process of hum
The thought of Renan, that of Strauss and of
in the background of this doctrine. The con
Godhead divests itself, as it were, of personali
towards an ethical pantheism. We perceive Go
current of volition and desire which, within us
is directed towards the moral ends of the
enemies of true religious zeal are, on the one han
and, on the other, fanaticism; the most desirabl
is that which is regulated by a discriminating
intelligence.

There is nothing of the revolutionary spirit i
Arnold. In making certain sacrifices, which he de
to the principle of criticism in all fields, he is
the instinct of a conservative nature. But he i
and brings to consciousness the national prefer
accepts, and in so doing he adopts a strongly h
towards the national habit of empirical unconscio
the prophet of equanimity by way of a flexible h
ing. The prose-writer in Arnold and the poet a
centre of a period, of which they represent t
character with all its dominant traits.

6. *Evolution: Darwin, Spencer, and Huxley.*-
Darwin[1] cannot be said to belong to literat

[1] Charles Robert Darwin, grandson of Erasmus Darwin
iv, Chap. V, sect. 2), was born in 1809 at Shrewsbury, stud
and Cambridge, and was attracted at an early age to the
science. From 1831 to 1836 he journeyed as a naturalist
cruise which brought him into touch with life in all parts
1842 he settled down to toil and study in the country until
Before 1840 he had already conceived the first idea of his the
at it for many years, putting it to the test of repeated ex
drawing up his deductive principles. In 1858, in agreement
Wallace, who had, on his part, come to analogous conclusio
a paper to the Linnean Society on 'The Tendency of Species
etc. In 1859 he published *The Origin of Species, etc.*; and
succession his great works, notably *The Variations of Plants a*

definition of literary work is presupposed an effort towards artistic expression. But it has most powerfully affected the

the historian of literature cannot afford to neglect it.

Darwin's is the very type of the scientific intelligence; he is

truth which he wants is concrete, and based on experience. The need for simple unity which is the mainspring of all inquiry that aims at an explanation, is in the case of Darwin accompanied and corrected by a manifold desire for caution. He expects to find reality difficult and complex; he has never found it otherwise; and in a supple and patient way, his judgment has clung fast to the habits of things, so as to be moulded by them in the process. For twenty years he knew how to keep back an intuitive generalization, allowing it to mature with time. Thus it is that his name has remained associated inseparably with a hypothesis which he was not the first to conceive, and for which he did not supply the formula which, to-day, is looked upon as the most satisfactory. Scrupulous and modest as he was, he did not, however, do full justice to his predecessors, and the theory of natural selection tends to become more and more subordinated to that of adaptation. The seeds which Lamarck sowed are more fruitful than his. Yet Darwin's wonderful sense of objectivity, together with the virtue of his intellectual example, leave him the honour of having won over the minds of his ... worthy ... and he

The Origin of Species opens to man a view of his past, and probably of his future, very different from that which had been current since ancient times. Darwin is fully aware of it, and yet his book, fraught with the emotion of great discoveries, is devoid of rhetorical effects, and even of every attempt at eloquence. He explains facts, discusses his views, and concludes with circumspection and simplicity. Despite the

1871; *The Expression of the Emotions, etc.*, 1872. See *Life and Letters*, ed. by Francis Darwin, 1887, study by Poulton, *Darwin and the Theory of Natural Selection*, 1896.

breadth of the theme, the poetry of imagination with which it is pregnant, and the anguish of the metaphysical curiosity which it encourages but does not satisfy, the sober flow of this prose hardly betrays the slightest tremor of emotion. There is no art here but honesty. This style is nevertheless attractive by virtue of the unfailing interest of the subject; and it shows a natural or acquired gift of clear expression. No matter how varied the aspects of the facts under examination, and how many the reserves and qualifications to be made, the progress of the demonstration, if at times slow, is never interrupted.

Darwin is not without knowing that his thesis—the variability of species, and their derivation by a continuous process of development from one or several elementary organisms—comes into conflict with the orthodox version of the history of the world. But he does not seem to give the point much attention, beyond remarking that, if he modifies the accepted idea of Divine creation, his doctrine is compatible with another idea, and one which is not less acceptable to the thinking mind. All about him, however, the latent conflict was turning into an open fight, and his disciples were led to take an active part in it.

Spencer [1] stands in a pronounced contrast to Darwin. He is more of the philosopher than the scientist; or, at least, he is more attracted to the process of generalizing than to the long and meticulous research which leads up to it. By training he is scientific and modern, and has, or wants to have, the outlook of a realist. But he displays a wide knowledge of physical or social reality, rather than a very full command of any special branch. He is more skilled in the handling of abstract ideas, and at the same time more able to adapt his

[1] Herbert Spencer, born at Derby in 1820, of a lower middle-class family of Dissenters, was educated privately, and strongly attracted to science; followed for some time the profession of engineer, then wrote political articles (*The Proper Sphere of Government*, 1842). In *Social Statics* (1850) and *Principles of Psychology* (1855), the outlines of his general doctrine are easily discernible. Between 1855 and 1860 he drew up the plan of his system, of which *First Principles* (published in 1862) forms the sketch. To the execution of the vast programme thus traced out he devoted a life of intense labour, in which he enjoyed the encouragement of a group of kindred minds. Success crowned his efforts, and finally he enjoyed a kind of sovereign fame as a philosopher both in England and abroad. Besides the *Principles of Biology* (1864–7), *New Principles of Psychology* (1870–2), *Principles of Sociology* (1876–96), and *Principles of Ethics* (1879–93), he published *Essays, etc.* (1858–74), *Education* (1861), *The Classification of the Sciences* (1864), *The Man versus the State* (1884). After his death in 1903 there appeared an *Autobiography* (1904). See Duncan, *Life and Letters of Spencer*, 1908; Thomson, *Spencer* (English Men of Science), 1906; H. Elliot, *Herbert Spencer*, 1917.

the matter rather than in the style. ... He has been charged to say without any undue expense of language; and his lighter ... but the fault is to be found in ... He says what he wishes writings, as, for example, his articles on education, afford pleasant reading. His intellectual life was fertile and varied; despite an occasional stiffness, his was an animated mind; he should be ranked among writers.

If his work, and his fame, impress us to-day by their ambitious proportion and their subsequent collapse, it is because they were both built upon a hastily prepared and unstable foundation. The synthesis in which he incorporated all the known results in every branch of knowledge has not stood the further progress of specialized research, nor that of the general philosophy of the sciences.

The hope of being able to integrate the whole of knowledge ... one single formula was decidedly premature. The attempt, however, was nobly inspired, and obeyed a legitimate craving ... reflection. In its way *First Principles* is a metaphysical ...em, where the vastness of the imaginat... itself a kind of interest. T... ask as that of moulding ir... ...ula, the la... ...rgy, ...r uns... ...cture. And when human ...ty of the largest intellectual ...hes the threshold of the unknowable, Spencer checks its ...se with words not too unworthy of th... However ... down in p...

... some solid parts, which will be lasting ... There are ... psychology, as in his ethics and his theory of social life ...er has mingled accurate and sharp observations ...ions, with an excessive love ...

y to a system of ethics ... the comity of nations, perhaps
His unbending economic individualism, and his
e of anything in the way of a developed collective
on, seem to answer the demands of a temperament,
aticism of a sect, rather than the serious lesson of
t when Spencer has ceased to be, even for his
ciples, the Aristotle of modern times, he will retain
of a strong personality, broad enough to realize
y amalgamation of philosophy and science.
t only a clever user of other men's thoughts. His
een won by the principle of evolution before he
of Darwin. He borrowed copiously, and in every
the materials of his borrowing were moulded as
em. He has his place in the history of ideas.
more than Spencer, can be regarded as a mere
knowledge. He stands out as a person of
h strong features. While Darwin holds himself
struggle, and Spencer comes down from the
m to the things of actuality, Huxley, on the
mately associates science with daily life. The
tuals, those thinkers with whom the passion
ual motive of conduct, find in him their leader.
e occasion he comes into open conflict with
. Although he does not shirk the fight, he
sly aggressive writer. There is no superfi-
ness of thought; nor is his verve, at times
icate. He has an intuitive sense of moral
he accepts absolutely the doctrine of the
tween the facts of consciousness and those
n, his horizon is not that of a narrow
aking knowledge human, and by setting
e full of generous activity, based upon
litional prejudice had deemed pernicious,
n any other to win for the scientific spirit
ied acceptance among men. A nation

born in 1825 near London, was the son of a school-
nd became attached in the capacity of naturalist
the East. His first works on zoology attracted
of those who associated themselves with the
Darwinian theories, he played an active part in
on as the leader of the scientific movement, took
ies of his day, and died in 1895. The following
diverse writings: *Man's Place in Nature*, 1863;
cted Essays (9 vols.), 1894; *Scientific Memoirs*,
rs, by L. Huxley, 1900.

value of person-
a warm esteem;
es.
postle of trans-
formation. By degrees, he raised an individual philosophy upon this basis. Like Spencer, he refuses to penetrate into the realms of the unknown, and in order to define his attitude he invents the missing word, 'agnosticism.' But to better purpose than Spencer, he preserves the critical freedom of his mind, and does not allow himself to become mentally imprisoned within the imaginative structure of evolutionism. His thought remains flexible enough to admit that if all outward evidence seems to reduce spirit to matter, at the same time all reflection reduces matter to spirit. His religion of truth, clashing with the doctrine of the Church, shapes itself as a form of irreligion. It retains, however, for any one who probes it under the surface, the quality of a positive belief. It feeds on a sufficient fund of feeling, and is strongly enough bound up with the intuitive reasons for life, to stand the test both of practice and of moral health. Huxley has

almost always instinct with a generous clear-sightedness.[1]

Bosanquet, 1927

CHAPTER III

THE IDEALISTIC REACTION

1. *Origin and Unity of the Movement.*—The tendencies of the Victorian age group themselves naturally round two axes; the main one being that traced out by the rationalistic and scientific movement, while the other, of almost equal importance, is to be found in the renascence of idealism. The latter, from the psychological point of view, is even more fertile in artistic expressions; from the purely literary standpoint it is the more important of the two. It is not so in the general mental activity of the time; intellectually, the epoch is more affected by the work of the first movement. The second, a necessary factor in the constitution itself of this age, interests a considerably smaller number of minds; it does not attract a larger number of eminent men; its influence does spread among the mass of average temperaments, but not to a greater degree, and perhaps even less, than the inverse movement. At bottom it is not spontaneous, but derivative; it is first and foremost a reaction.

No doubt it can be very directly traced back to some origins at least in the preceding period. A vast association of emotional and imaginative tendencies, all inclined towards an intuitive philosophy and a kind of organic morality, it represents, as it were, an offshoot of Romanticism, whose inner impulse it prolongs and diversifies. The doctrine of Carlyle, the sentimental art of Dickens, the religious revival of Oxford, the aesthetic and social crusade of Ruskin, are one and all in psychological affinity with the most profound spiritual impulses which had produced the work of a Wordsworth, a Shelley, and a Keats. New elements come to add themselves to these impulses, without altering their essential qualities. There is no real break, but rather an unseen transmission, and a virtual equivalence, between Blake and Ruskin.

The equivalence, however, is mainly virtual. Carlyle and his disciples are not aware that their idealism is a transposed variety of Romantic mysticism. Blinded by the consciousness of conflicts on secondary points, Carlyle believes that he

is, in his main purpose and effort, the enemy and destroyer of Romanticism. Newman and Ruskin seek their precursors

Nevertheless, all are stimulated to thought, to action, and to the affirmation of themselves, by one kind of spiritual suffering, in which the dominant note is the irritation of a discontented sensibility. It is against the spirit of their age—against the overwhelming progress of rationalism, of science, of industrial selfishness—that they meditate or glow with feeling, and that they write or speak. One cannot understand their attitudes without having surveyed at one glance the matter-of-fact civilization which encircles them, forces itself upon them, and prompts them to revolt.

Under the varied expressions of their faith, the masters of idealism, be it philosophical, humanitarian, religious, artistic, or social in aim, obey the same instincts; the deepest roots of
he different aspects
a coherent whole.
rness of life in the
Victorian age, there does lurk one single counter-movement of ardours and enthusiasms.

2. *Idealism and Philosophy. Carlyle.*—Carlyle[1] proclaims,

with singular energy and authority, the place which he wishes to occupy in the moral history of his country. The historian of literature, just as the student of ideas, cannot do better than grant him this desire. While figuring as the apostle of instinct and the adversary of analysis, he has, it must be admitted, a clear [illegible] of the struggle he is waging to be able [illegible] hesitation of uncertainty. After an anxious early youth, stirred by the cravings of the intelligence, greedily desirous of the knowledge to be gleaned from books, and open to all the influences of pure science and reason, he tries to find himself, only to discover, at last, that he has become the bitter antagonist of what he had hitherto revered. His personality is moulded for life in the course of the crisis which brings about its sudden maturity. He rejects and condemns the lust of the understanding, which around him has seized upon an ever larger number of minds. Since his century is bound by unbreakable chains to this effort of the reasoning thinkers, he will, henceforth, be the enemy of his century.

This intuition of self is not an arbitrary creation. Carlyle discovers the deepest foundation of his personality, and rests upon it with a firmness which nothing will ever shake. In this way he resumes contact with all the heritage which ancestral experience has accumulated, with a temperament of soul whose wealth of dormant ideas he will now realize and cultivate. His Scottish heredity is mixed; in it contrary tendencies work side by side; a keen utilitarian finesse of thought, or shall we say logical disposition, is closely allied with a vague and pent-up mysticism. It is in the secular reserves of a latent Puritanism, as well as in a deeply spiritual sense of life, that Carlyle finds an untapped vein of rich ore, to be exploited for his literary work. No one has said better than Carlyle how much he owes to his father, his family, and

MacMechan, 1896; *French Revolution*, ed. by Rose, 1909; *Correspondence with Emerson*, ed. by Norton, 1883; *Correspondence with Goethe*, 1897; *Letters, 1826–1836*, ed. 1888; *New Letters*, ed. by A. Carlyle, 1904; *Love Letters*, ed. by A. Carlyle, 1909. See Froude: *History of the First Forty Years, etc.*, 1882; *Life in London*, 1884; biographies by Garnett (Great Writers), 1887; Nichol (English Men of Letters), 1892; Wilson (*Carlyle till Marriage*, 1923, followed by *Carlyle to the French Revolution*, 1924; *Carlyle on Cromwell and Others*, 1925; *Carlyle at his Zenith*, 1927, etc.); E. Neff, *Carlyle*, 1932; studies by Taine (*L'Idéalisme anglais, etc.*), 1864; Craig (*Making of Carlyle*), 1908; Evans (*Makers of Literature*), 1909; Cazamian (*Carlyle*), 1913, English translation 1932; Rowe (*Carlyle as a Critic of Literature*), 1910; Carré (*Gœthe en Angleterre*), 1920; Ralli (*Guide to Carlyle*), 1920; Knut Hagberg (*Thomas Carlyle*), 1925; O. Burdett (*The Two Carlyles*), 1930; E. Neff (*Carlyle*), 1932; V. Basch (*Carlyle*), 1938.

the Germanic school of thought, which openly condemns the Latin fondness for and pursuit of lucidity. By so radical and decisive a choice, and one in which he reveals his true self, he violently broke up the complex psychological unity

Sartor Resartus is an ebullition of ideas and images many of which bear the stamp of their Germanic origin; and the feverish zeal which animates this strange book is like an

vhich,

were

of the

'clothes'—of universal symbolism—or that of the development and succession of forms, is derived from such or such a precise source The passionate ardour which brings these themes into prominence wells up from the deep personality of Carlyle himself. It is the spirit of biblical prophecy, the exaltation of the Puritan apocalypse, that fire the fervour of this philosophic poet who represents, one might say, the fusion of a metaphysical idealism with the burning faith of an Ezekiel.

Sartor Resartus is a veritable storehouse of ideas, a centre of germinating thought The enigmatic figure of its hero affords Carlyle the opportunity to give us an autobiography

in disguise. Here he resumes, stage by stage, and in striking fashion, the history of his soul's development, from egoistical disquietude and the morbid preoccupation with self, through the 'everlasting no,' to the certainty and affirmation of belief. The crisis through which he passes becomes thus the centre of a system of individual duties, which is extended very soon to embrace social relations. Modern society, in Carlyle's opinion, is diseased; and the Romanticists' malady of the soul, puerile doubt and pain, are the signs of that inner corruption. The Byronic age must be followed by that of Goethe; the teaching of *Wilhelm Meister*, interpreted by a conscience more Christian than Dionysiac, brings to the world the gospel of healing. Self-forgetfulness, renunciation, action, such are the laws which govern the psychological well-being of the soul. To each personality they bring a strong sense of organized unity, without which no vital success is possible. It is through them also that mankind as a whole will find the key to its rebirth. All human transformation springs from within. The outward garb of institutions, of practical activities and manners, will be renovated by the effect of a spiritual rejuvenation.

Such are the main ideas round which the work of Carlyle develops; he gives them repeated and vehement expression; applies them to history, and to the conduct of nations. According to him, that mystic element which penetrates the reality of everyday life and which sustains it—the divine effusion—is concentrated through a kind of superior intuition in the hearts of certain privileged beings; the guides, the pastors of the flock, are known by their sincerity, by the inexplicable assurance which constitutes their strength, by the success which crowns their stubborn will in the face of all obstacles, and which sanctions, as it were, the fact of their spontaneous adaptation to the wishes of the universe. Their 'heroism' consists in an unbroken contact with the supernatural centre whence all knowledge and all incentive to action are diffused. The past history of mankind is fully permeated by the irradiation of those great inspired souls; they have left their stamp upon successive civilizations; and the one which is just beginning has as its legislators the modern heirs of priests and kings, the masters of thought, the men of letters.

There is no other philosophy of history. To Carlyle the French Revolution represents the end of a society whose soul

is dead, the collapse of a vast organization of deceptive appearances This destruction, certainly ... with it no new pri... enough to create ... of justice; and ... of liberated passions leads France from anarchy to chaos, even to the day when the desperate call for order, in itself creative because it is part of the permanent will of things, brings forward a Bonaparte, saviour and tyrant alike. On the contrary, a Cromwell and a Frederick II, the one emerging from religious revolt, the other from war, outlive the negative missions which they had to fulfil by force in each case, and thus come to display all their talent of intuitive constructiveness in the creation of a system of social discipline.

The war waged by supernaturally guided action against evil is everlasting· the divine plan of the universe, in daily jeopardy, has to be each day readjusted The century of mechanical invention has its special problems, of a not less grievous nature. To-day, the seat of the trouble is in society. Industry is a force for good, but blind to aught else than its own interests. It crushes humanity, it attracts and then disperses unceasingly whole masses of miserable beings, and the doctors of political economy see no other salvation than the still freer and more rapid working of its machinery A doctrine of scholarly passiveness will not save society. The Chartist movement, the turbulent rise and oncoming tide of a suffering nation, obeys a cosmic rhythm; it carries within itself the principle of its legitimacy It cannot be held back by any vain rational dogma. In order to restrain the riotous mob, one must appease the just passion which rouses it An organization of labour is indispensable In it the imperious note shall be dominant, for order without authority is non-existent; but it shall be well-intentioned and indulgent, and shall grant to the living tools that create wealth the sacred rights of human personalities, it will replace economic contracts by common accord between man and ... the model for all ... by the Church, ... the vigilant abb... sovereign A new aristocracy is growing in the persons of the captains of industry, let them rise to the height of their task, for the future is in their hands

Carlyle calls upon them and at the same time, denounces

...its irritation.
...—the lies, the cowardice,
...avours of a mean, half-hearted courage.
y, progress, the reign of mechanism, all whet his
inism scandalizes him. The life of society remains
he inner life is still being eaten into by doubt; and
last rags of a worn-out Hebraism, a young faith,
nd free, has not yet been strong enough to dis-
f. . . . Carlyle's last days are spent in an atmosphere
nrelieved sadness.

however, had not been unfruitful. Carlyle could
it had contributed in restoring the vitality of his
e saw, he could hardly find pleasure in such a
use the mediocrity of his age was odious to him.
ucceeded, despite everything, in infusing into a
ened with decadence the necessary psychological
survival. He had evangelized a small *élite*,
imly awakened a greater number of consciences;
recovering possession of herself, was attending
er wounds, and had healed some unbearable
was partly due to Carlyle's influence. The
souls was now, to a perceptible degree, less
as a clearer and firmer ring in the assertion
he determination not to die had learnt from
ecrets by which the threat of death is averted
was not enough, however, for Carlyle; he
with nothing less than the reign of a noble
But beneath and beyond his own thought,
e desire had indeed been that of national
his sense, he could have admitted that he
vard.

ce is not spent. Still, his books no longer
s to offer. What constituted their fresh
been absorbed, and the readers of to-day
them for the revelation of their wisdom.
ulsating with eloquent appeal, illumined
moving indeed; but their art bears the
because its originality is deeply coloured
ciousness.

of the most personal. In its sincerity,
erament, it is not devoid of a certain

affectation; it testifies to a fondness for violent habits of mind and feeling. It is a style that has been moulded into shape by the maturing of his genius under the action of an exalted sense of prophecy, of a spiritual enthusiasm, and under the influence of an intimate contact with German thought. The language of his early years has balance and simplicity. With [illegible] writer [illegible] nse of [illegible] at the same time; an unquenchable ardour breaks in upon and [illegible]

[illegible] volcanic rocks. In the order of powerfulness its effects are incomparable; but more winning are the rare occasions when its passion and its irony relax, and the evocation of the seer [illegible] ide up of faith, of eager [illegible] work is that of a poet, [illegible] incapable of it, whose energy spends itself in vigorous, brief flights of expression. His imagination, however, the strongest of his faculties, lends unity in movement and in tone to his broader narratives and pictures. The inspiration which carries his *French Revolution* forward has the amplitude of epic grandeur To Carlyle objectivity is impossible, he does not know what detachment from self means, nor does he possess the fine perception of the pure artist in souls. But in his sympathy he can thoroughly grasp the characters which harmonize with his own, and so re-create them. His portrait of Cromwell is admirable. He is great by virtue of his intuition. That divining power he possesses to search the past or the present, fallible and limited as it is, cast forth, when favoured by spiritual grace, flashes of vivid light and even of beauty which are among the treasures of literature.

3. *Dickens and the Social Novel.*—(*a*) DICKENS.—There is not any injustice to Dickens[1] in going straight to the central

[1] Charles Dickens, born at Portsmouth in 1812, the son of a small naval functionary, spent his early years in Kent and received an incomplete education, in London, where his father had been imprisoned for debts, he was

feeling which gives life to his work; and that feeling is social. Through it he is linked up with a whole group of writers, and has a place in a great movement of the time.

No novelist before Dickens had treated the lower middle classes on such broad lines or in so frank a way. He studies them not as a detached, superior kind of observer, but as one on their own level; a sympathy, an immediate community of impressions, and, as it were, an instinctive fraternity, thus impregnate his study. Be the tone that of pathos or of humour, the mediocre lives on which he focuses his and our attention come, as if naturally, to acquire the dignity of art. Such is the permanent foundation of his realism. But below it, in the inner realms of consciousness, we feel the quivering image, the anguish of soul-debasing poverty. The unforgettable experience of his early youth—that humiliating phase of his life—becomes thus one of the decisive elements in the formation of his personality. Even when those hardships had been left behind, Dickens could never forget them. It was this dim memory, at the secret core of his very life-success, that continued to sustain the energy of his effort to secure his material independence against all risks. It helped to intensify as well the multiple suggestion of active charity which made

employed in a blacking warehouse. After this period of struggle he passed some time in a private school, and went into a solicitor's office, then worked for various newspapers in the capacity of Parliamentary reporter or provincial correspondent. In 1833 he began his pen-pictures of life with *Sketches by Boz* (published in volume form, 1836). The demand of a publisher for the text of a humorous collection of stories, to which illustrations were to be supplied, resulted in the series of *The Pickwick Papers* (published 1836–7). Their success was tremendous and placed him in the front rank of writers. He then published in monthly instalments *Oliver Twist* (1837–8), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–9), *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Barnaby Rudge* (1840–1). A voyage to the United States supplied him with *American Notes* (1842), and also inspired his *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843–4). In 1843–8 appeared the *Christmas Books* (*A Christmas Carol*, etc.); then *Dombey and Son* (1847–8), *David Copperfield* (1849–50), *Bleak House* (1852–3), *Hard Times* (1854), *Little Dorrit* (1857–8), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1860–1), *Our Mutual Friend* (1864). He died in June 1870, leaving the incomplete novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). He had given many public readings in England and in America (1858–68); edited periodicals (*Household Words*, *All the Year Round*); written for the stage; published *Pictures from Italy* (1846), *A Child's History of England* (1852–4), etc. *Works*, Gadshill ed., 1897, etc.; Bibliographical ed., 1902; Imperial ed., 1902, etc. *Letters*, 3 vols., 1880–1. See the critical biographies by Forster, 1872–4; Ward (English Men of Letters), 1882; Marzials (Great Writers), 1887; P. Fitzgerald, 1905; Chesterton, 1906; Langton (*Childhood of Dickens*), 1912; studies by Harrison (*Dickens's Place in Literature*), 1894; Gissing (*Charles Dickens, a Critical Study*), 1898; Cazamian (*Roman social en Angleterre*), 1903; Munro (*Dickens et Daudet*), 1908; Barlow (*Genius of Dickens*), 1909; W. Dibelius (*Charles Dickens*), Leipzig, 1922; Delattre (Les Cent Chefs-d'œuvre étrangers); idem (*Dickens et la France*), 1927.

Dickens an apostle, and turned his work into a gospel of humanitarianism

Considered from this point of view, Dickens has his place in the idealistic reaction His influence combined itself with that of Carlyle, whose authority as a teacher he accepted or felt But his most important significance is not that he shared in the philanthropic crusade, that he showed up abuses, or prepared those fits of moral compunction from which reforms have sprung Despite the practical benefits which did accrue from such a task, it cannot be said that Dickens was always happily inspired in this direction,[1] indeed, his art suffered from the bitter or strained mood which usually goes with a thesis of denunciation Above all, he has stimulated the national sensibility which was slowly wasting away in the dry atmosphere of a utilitarian age, he has re-established balance and a more wholesome order in the proportionate values of the motives of life This psychological action is brought to its most precise and most effectual pitch in his impassioned attack on the frame of mind which supports the individualistic theory of the economists And here the criticism of the novelist succeeds in shaking the moral foundations of a doctrine Dickens has contributed to the salutary weakening of dogmatic egoism On this point his teaching comes into line with that of Carlyle and Ruskin, he takes up his stand with the prophets of sentiment against the harder advocates of rationalism In other respects, his temperament holds him aloof from their mystic exaltation He retains a firm hold on reality, and never loses the sense of the average conditions which all useful activities must fulfil An ardent believer in progress, moderate in his views and of an optimistic turn of mind, he lives and thinks in complete accord with the middle-class opinions of his day

And this middle class for Dickens is that of London of the ancient cities, and the agricultural districts of the south He knows nothing about the feverish existence of the working classes in the midlands and in the north or if he does his

[1] He denounced the new Poor Law and the workhouse system the rigours of the penal code as of the penitentiary system the slowness of justice the neglect of children, the carelessness and cruelty of a great number of private school masters, the harsh laws for the protection of game the bad state of sanitation in the poorer quarters of cities the parallel excesses of the workers' unions and of the egoism of employers, the economic doctrine of *laisser faire* and the social indifference which had been set up as a principle, etc

2 1

knowledge is very imperfect. The problems he touches upo in the course of his novels do not concern the industrial crowd which had recently developed, but rather a class of long stand ing, with settled and traditional characteristics. Instead c bringing us into direct contact with the epoch of machinery and the new world, he leads us back towards the past. Whil his intentions are anything but reactionary, his instinctiv preferences tend in this direction. The customs and habit he describes most readily savour somewhat of the archaic only rarely does he venture beyond the field of observatio which he had viewed in his youth. The joviality, the cor diality he depicts or teaches are those of a society that is sti patriarchal, and that has been just perceptibly altered, bu not invaded and upset by modern life. Railways will neve be anything else than a sensational wonder for Dickens; i is by the jingling of stage-coach harness that his imaginatio is wakened into spontaneous play.

Just as the background in his novels dates from 182 or 1830, and underneath the symptoms of a changing ag tends to link up with the eighteenth century, so his inne nature, attuned to the spirit of an animated, picturesque, an familiar life, finds itself in harmony with a fairly average an a permanent type of the English temperament. Dicken appealed to the very heart of England, and she recognize herself in his pages because he offered her a picture of herse which she loved to see; he showed her an England at her bes In a nation of very mixed tendencies—like every other natio in this respect—he singles out the features of genial humanit and organizes them into a whole; the author himself assume and often gives to his characters, an expression of sympathy the smile of humour, and the cheeriness of a kind hear This composite portrait, in which not only Mr. Pickwick bu many others have their shares, has the value of a syntheti image; the moral preferences of Dickens enter into every on of its lineaments. These preferences comprise, with a warr expansiveness of heart, a liking for the peculiarities of char acter, and almost a taste for eccentric oddities; a realisr both psychological and descriptive, without system or rigou which springs from a lively sense of buoyant curiosity, full c an instinctive trust in life. Thus it was that the very grea success of Dickens's work had the efficacy of a deep influence that his novels told in favour of solidarity, against the egoisti spirit of the age; and that his popularity, which waned for,

time after his death, has now again come into its own, and no limit can be set to its duration.

Dickens wrote rapidly. His strenuous energy was not always a substitute for careful art. His faults in taste and in style, the failings of his intuitive verve, are obvious; his literary individuality lacks polish. He sacrifices balance for the sake of intense effects; his expression obeys monotonous habits; he repeats himself to excess His pathos is cheap or exaggerated; his imagination in its continual effort to emphasize the character of things tends rather to distort them; his vision, fond of agitated outlines, is apt to lose the very sense of repose. There is working, at the very core of his genius, a persistent spirit of Romanticism, which subordinates the actual truth, like the soberness, of every feature to emotional or picturesque values, his realism is stirred by a feverish force of hallucination And throughout the whole of his work the effusion and the expression of self disturb or contradict the relative objectivity, without which there could be no novel of real life At every turn in his stories we come upon the favourable or unfavourable opinions of the author—a kind of sentimental commentary on his own work, and these instances of bias, intensified by [illegible] preferences and arguments [illegible]

[illegible] Dickens found eas[illegible] succeeding generation censured them severely, are to-day seen in a more mellow perspective as connected with the sovereign gifts of an inspired artist As a creator, Dickens is prodigious The picture he has painted of the social world is one of the richest in the range of literature. His perception of things and of [illegible] s remarkable for its direct [illegible] e not [illegible] l [illegible]

[illegible] it obeys are those of e[illegible] humour, the real is organized into a show of varied interest, always intense in effect, and of a tone either dramatic or facetious Into this world no one can penetrate unless he has bowed to the artist's will, but such is the power of his charm that our critical faculty is disarmed Few are the readers wholly proof against the spell.

At the first glance our eye is caught by the swarming host

of human figures. Over the vast fresco of his work, Dickens has thrown them in plenty; they give to every part the pulsation of life itself. Still, their quality is far from equal. The writer has not created them through one and the same intuition of their original beings; he has not felt them all grow upon him with one and the same imperiousness. Their features may have been suggested from the outside by a caprice of the imagination, by a preconceived feeling, or by the demands of the plot; they may represent superficial or deductive intentions; instead of being nourished from the deeper personality of the novelist, they may be, as it were, engrafted upon more exterior elements—mere desires for antithesis or effect. Then it is that, being less directly connected with the very substance of their maker, they more closely resemble one or other of his features, and less closely resemble life. They bear the stamp of his caprice, of a bent in his mind, of some partiality in his outlook; and being devoid of any lineaments proper to themselves which might have played the part of an addition or a corrective, they are nothing but that impoverished expression of their creator's personality. There is in the work of Dickens a whole range of artificial creatures, arbitrarily drawn by his somewhat crude dramatic sense, by his hasty aversions, by his taste for drollery which often approaches caricature. And so it happens that his personages have no other interest but what they may owe to satire, melodrama, or farce.

But into the satire, pathos, or farce many of his heroes infuse the superior virtue of an irresistible vitality. These bear a no less recognizable imprint of their origin; a Pickwick, a Sam Weller, a Jingle, a Micawber, a Peggotty, a Dick Swiveller, a Marchioness, quite as much as a David Copperfield, are members of one family, whose common father is easily divined; they all have something of his readily compassionate humanity, and some gleam of his humour. Nevertheless, they are themselves, and develop according to their own principles. So extreme is their diversity that they exemplify in every respect the essential individuality of living beings. But they all have an irrefutability, a witchcraft in them; no one thinks of discussing them; they come forth, and we accept them; they possess the solidity, the volume of three-dimensional figures; the personality which supports them has transferred itself entirely into them, has shaped them out according to the mysterious instinct of all its powers.

...pieces of the stage, is carried through with admirable abundance and variety. Yet here again *we find* many grades. The best of the personages are not usually those whom Dickens has studied most deliberately and consciously. It is not often that his traitors, heroes, or heroines have quite as much flavour, as much vivaciousness or irresistible truth, as the less prominent characters which he has

What is true of the characters is also true of the action. The most elaborately worked-out plots, in Dickens, are not the most satisfactory. Where the thesis is stressed, as in the historical and in the purely social novels (*Barnaby Rudge*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Hard Times*), we feel that too rigid an intention is at work; and that effort towards a concentration

genius savours very much of the old picaresque model, his favourite theme is that of life, a life which lasts, which renews itself, and which is born, as it were, of itself. In the opening chapters of *Pickwick* the connecting thread is of the most slender; later it gains strength, without allowing the reader to forget the purely comic purpose with which the book began; and a plot revolving round the biography of a central character (as in *Nicholas Nickleby*, *David Copperfield*) imparts a supple unity to the best novels. In his later work Dickens endeavoured to brace up this rather lax construction; *Great Expectations* is a novel of a strong and sober texture, which takes a place apart from all the rest

The profusion of his scenic settings answers to the abundance of his personages The backgrounds are painted with an ample brush, and the lavishness of details breathes a kind of exhilaration. Description, with Dickens, is more than a means, very often it is an end in itself. It contributes to the general effect, but with such varied and powerful resources at its command that it subordinates the other elements of the narrative to itself. Thus the novel tends to become above all evocative; and imagination, the instrument of realism, carries the search for intense truth right to the domain of purely

vision. The writer's senses are quick and keen; nature, ects of concrete life, the picturesqueness of things, absorbed, are transferred to his work in facile patches, nuch highly coloured as vibrating, astir with a nervous of each contour. The material universe appears as ıp of broken lines, pronounced gestures, and rapid ;. Supremely suggestive, this art has its limitation tain instability, a kind of flickering exaggeration. The in the succession of images, with Dickens, often shows ight morbidness.

s calmer and less feverish spells of work, this gift of ; with life all that appeals to the senses has the happiest He calls up before our eyes scene after scene of a ıade striking, and which yet our feeling of normal life g to accept: so accurately is the individual character ;s thrown into relief, and so much realistic flavour is up with the eloquence, the moving poetry, or the drollery, which are the main object and indeed the the picture.

eason is that the language which has to express both notions and those images is naturally rife with them. ; is a great writer by virtue of the spontaneity of his ınd this with a minimum of art. His vocabulary has undant wealth; it wells up naturally and easily; all erent genius of the English race for concrete perception nourish it. It carries with it, and turns to use, the s of other veins of speech—learned words, technical but the main inexhaustible stream is drawn from the a racy, national, in no way particularized experience. ning process of culture is less perceptible here than in ks of many other writers. Dickens, like Carlyle, has hes of vulgarity—hardly perceptible, at once forgotten he spell of his delicately generous heart. The highest of his style is its movement; a movement which is at rained and difficult to follow, but, in its uninterrupted flow, carries on the narration or dialogue without any stagnating inertia. In certain respects the conversa- ı Dickens's novels are unequalled; the most familiar hose of artless comedy or of expressive self-revelation, the mouths of his characters a frankness, an appro- ess reaching to perfection. On the other hand, when ıation tends to be artificial, and the verve less spon- , an unreal note is immediately perceptible in the

speak in a somewhat artificial tone, which sounds like a thinly veiled echo of the writer's own voice.

No analysis can grasp the essential originality of such a work; its power of persuasion, which sweeps away our reserves, makes us forgive all the faults of too insistent a method, of a sentimental search for pathos, of an excessive striving after comic effects. Each of these weaknesses is compensated by merits of greater importance. Everything considered, it is due to his talent of sympathy, to his sense of the pitiful

...entive comedy,
keeps his place
a pretty good
few have read

it without feeling at times annoyed, and much more often won over to the writer's will.

This art has a deep human quality As its chief instru-

... being
to the
istitute

humour, if it did not contain a principle of self-control, the

that his art, threatened in other respects with a too definite

and the complexity
have lacked.
either the most
st, nor the most
of tale writers,

but he is probably the most ..., the most typical, and the greatest of them all.

In his own sphere there is none in his time who can approach him. The novel of social inspiration, however, attracts the

talents of original writers; from 1840 to 1850 this kind engrosses most of the vitality of English fiction.

(*b*) Disraeli, Mrs. Gaskell, Kingsley, the Brontës.—Although indebted to his father for certain precious advantages in the struggle for success to which he consecrated his career, Disraeli [1] can well be described as the sole maker of his own fame. He disarmed racial prejudice; and in the nation where the pride of aristocratic birth had remained most strongly rooted, this Jew—for such he was—although only separated by a generation from his foreign origin, as leader of the Conservative party came to impose his authority on the descendants of the most ancient English families. Such an extraordinary destiny as his represents the triumph of personality. Never has the writer, or the politician, been more decidedly inseparable from the man.

The most prominent feature with Disraeli is perhaps the suppleness of his nature. Thanks to a clearer faculty of perception, sharpened again by a more conscious apprenticeship, he singled out and definitely grasped the faculty of silent adaptation which was the core of English tradition; he mastered it, and, while assimilating, he deepened it; he rediscovered the claims of political empiricism, and, taking up the heritage of Burke's doctrine, appeared as his successor. But he could not have so efficiently continued it, unless his temperament had been attuned to it. His oriental sense of craftiness and opportunism infused a genuine sincerity into his communion with the ancient wisdom of the British instinct. And his imagination naturally clothed that wisdom with

[1] Benjamin Disraeli, grandson of a Venetian Jew who had settled in England, and the son of a distinguished man of letters whose fortune brought him into contact with the aristocracy, was born in London in 1804; educated privately, he planned, while yet very young, a programme of political and literary ambition. He published several novels: *Vivian Grey* (1826), *The Young Duke* (1831), *Contarini Fleming* (1832), *The Wondrous Tale of Alroy* (1833), *Henrietta Temple* (1837), *Venetia* (1837); satires and parodies: *Captain Popanilla* (1828), *The Infernal Marriage* (1834), etc.; after several reverses he succeeded in entering Parliament in 1837, supplied the 'Young-England' party with a doctrine, which he preached in three novels, *Coningsby* (1844), *Sybil* (1845), *Tancred* (1847); leader of the Opposition against Peel, he took office in 1852; grouping round him the Conservative party, he carried through the Reform Act of 1867, and as Prime Minister directed English politics (Congress of Berlin, 1878). Created Lord Beaconsfield, he died in 1881. His writings include two further novels, *Lothair* (1870) and *Endymion* (1880); a biography, *Lord George Bentinck* (1852); a political pamphlet, *Vindication of the English Constitution* (1835), etc. *Selected Speeches*, ed. by Kebbel, 1882. *Novels and Tales*, 11 vols., 1881. See biographies by Monypenny and Buckle, 1910–20; D. L. Murray, 1927; André Maurois, 1927; studies by Brandes, 1877 (English ed. 1880); Froude, 1890; Kebbel, 1888; Whibley, 1900; Cromer, 1912.

and quite openly grapples with the fundamental problems at issue. This is the literary medium chosen by Disraeli to disseminate the ideas of a programme which he has now definitely drawn up, that of 'Young England.' *Coningsby* and *Sybil* in succession explain its political and economic sides. The cause of the trouble is the individualism of a society where all the organic bonds which used to support the national unity are now broken. A Whig aristocracy, egoistic and devoid of any traditional sentiment; an energetic middle class, solely absorbed in the pursuit of wealth; men of reason, cold-blooded sophists, deceiving theorists, the economists, the Utilitarians, have destroyed the vital harmony which imparted its health to the British body politic. They have divided class from class, individual from individual. Left to itself, industry has crushed beneath its unyielding mechanism a defenceless humanity; and the natural forces of counter-action which ought to have imposed a limit to its unchecked play—the authority of the sovereign, the public spirit of a nobility rooted in the soil—have both failed at the hour of need. What is required is that in religion, obedience, charity, in the generous emotions of veneration and respect, there should be revived again the system of feudal equality among vassals before their suzerain, the medieval liberty of the subject in his relation to his prince and his father. The Church, endowed with the spiritual power, will play her part in this general accord, which will re-establish justice through love. The lot of the peasant will be happy, if the castle watches over the interests of the cottage; the factory, that new, unstable force, will integrate itself in the order which it has long been disturbing, as soon as its proper place within it is recognized, and instead of upsetting will thenceforth vitalize it; and presiding over a salutary hierarchy of rights, all of which will be justified by correlative duties, the Church and the Throne will jointly exercise a vigilant control over all souls. This gospel, which owes much to the teaching of Carlyle, ends in a kind of fanciful mysticism; *Tancred* quite openly holds out to the troubled, diseased West the vision of the land where the source of inspiration never runs dry, the Holy East, and the Asia of the prophets.

Disraeli was never again to write anything of so rich a substance, or of a significance that would remain so fresh. Those books, saturated with didactic intentions, soaked through and through with self-interested motives, are artistically of most

unequal merit. Their very realism, often, solid as it is and based on documents, derives an unreal colouring from the fanciful elements with which it is mixed; the characters have hardly any other life than what they may owe to the symbolism of their actions, or to the meaning of their words; the plots are strange, and yet not unforeseen; an ardour, an animation of mind and verve are constantly rising almost to eloquence and pathos, without ever reaching them. But the

successive forms of modern imperialism, he has deduced all the consequences of an anti-rational principle in politics, and, more thoroughly than Burke, has laid down the laws of a

that knows how to remain supple and free. Her teaching is entirely spontaneous, it voices the immediate reaction of a sensibility in contact with the facts, the range of her books is none other than that of her personal experience, and as she never ventures beyond what she knows *intimately*, her pictures are true at the same time as they are eloquent. When she portrays industrial conflicts (as in *Mary Barton*), or the contrast between the kindly civilization of the agricultural south, and the keen individualism of the north, with its feverish absorption in the progress of machinery (*North and*

South), her pages have a virtue of human persuasion, and played a prominent part among the most active suggestions making for the solidarity which was from that time gradually recognized. Although her didactic purpose did not go beyond the duty of charity and mutual sympathy, she thus stressed the psychological—or the deepest—aspects of the reaction, already begun, against the dogma of economic egoism. But the value of her art is enhanced by its just and finely tempered quality. The manners, the characters, the language of her heroes, whether they are employers, or churchmen, or belong to the labouring class as land or manual workers, are of an order of truth still slightly idealized, but based on concrete observation, and quite close to the view of reality which one can expect from a woman's frank, tender, and yet penetrating glance.

The same delicately tempered perception, the same tactful handling of the finer shades of expression, also give their value to the works where her realism, escaping the riddle of social problems, devotes itself to the study of personality and environment for the sake of their picturesque variety only. Her attempts at coping with dramatic situations, or her explicit defence of some cause, as her plea against the stigma that attaches to a seduced woman (*Ruth*), are not equally felicitous; it is here, perhaps, that her art finds its limitation, or at least, that the taste of many readers has fixed it. On the contrary, the scenes and episodes of provincial life which she has set and grouped in the trim frame of a quiet little town, stirred only by the hundred and one petty concerns of sentiment and pride, are dear to all English hearts (*Cranford*). This delightful mingling of sly satire, humour, and emotion gave George Eliot the model for her first tales; it reminds one of Jane Austen, in a manner less brilliant and vigorous, but with greater tenderness of charm. Through her work as a whole, Mrs. Gaskell deserves to be ranked among the representatives of psychological realism; she has there a place by herself; for if she does not penetrate very deep, and scarcely probes for the abnormal regions of consciousness, she moves within the average expanses of the inner world with remarkable ease and sureness.

Charles Kingsley [1] is one of those Romantic temperaments,

[1] Charles Kingsley, born in 1819 in the south-west of England, was the son of a cleric; studied at Cambridge, took orders, and passed the greater part of his life as Anglican minister in the rural parish of Eversley, in Hampshire. He wrote a dramatic poem, *The Saint's Tragedy* (1848); formed with Maurice, Ludlow, etc., a group of theorists whose study was social progress and who

zeal as a young clergyman, determined to live up to the

fever, and never succeeds in reaching a state of serenity. Whereas a Tennyson disciplines his passion and curbs it to a search after perfect form, Kingsley with his facile but uncertain talent, his inability to realize the exact task of the artist, only succeeds in producing second-rate work in the various branches of literature towards which his disquietude of temperament prompts him to turn.

He has none the less given its most eloquent appeal to the social novel. *Yeast* and, above all, *Alton Locke* have lost

thousands of readers something of the generosity of Christian Socialism. This doctrine, in its English form, gathers and reconciles the various influences at work in those agitated

---

Ravenshoe, 1862, etc.)

years, when the spirit of democracy was fermenting, still in open opposition to the absolute régimes in force; the years when the hope of a juster order sprang from the climax of intolerable conditions in industry. The preaching of Kingsley is based upon the ideas of Carlyle. His theology is dependent upon that of Maurice,[1] who taught that the Saviour's sacrifice having redeemed the flesh as well as the spirit, the scope of charity should not stop short of our neighbours' bodily welfare. The life of Kingsley had brought him into contact with poverty both in rural districts and in towns, but he was ignorant of the new meaning placed upon the word by the advent of machinery and concentrated production. His ideas apply only to the needs of the small workshop. To the French co-operators he owes the principle of an active fraternity without which, he thinks, no society can continue to exist.

These themes are fully brought out in his two novels, where they are intermingled with scenes from life and pictures of manners, painted with a broad and strong, though hasty touch. In choosing the framework of the stories Kingsley does not depart from the traditional rules of precedence; despite his rather bitter Radicalism, he shows respect for established moral authorities: that of the nobility, if it does not shirk its duties; that of the clergy, if it rises to the height of its task. Where he touches upon new ground is in those pages in which he fearlessly sets out to describe the decaying state of the country districts; the dark ignorance which enshrouds the Puritan lower middle class of the towns; the painful ugliness of the slums, the contagious vice, lawlessness, and disease which radiate from them and are a menace to the happy and the rich; the slavery of the workers whom the sweater fattens upon. The destiny of Alton Locke, whose development was hindered by the inferiority of his birth, symbolizes the cruellest aspect of social evil, the unequal chances of culture and full human development offered to the various classes.

The realism of Kingsley is pervaded by a powerful sensibility. Like that of Dickens, it does not seek a finely shaded truth, but soothes itself by extracting from all objects the silent meaning which lies beneath the surface, and which is tacitly repressed by convention. He wants to open our eyes, to make us feel; and the too forceful pressure thus exerted

[1] See above, Chap. II, sect. 4.

is the cause of the resistance which his interpretation of life, despite its vigour, ultimately awakens in the reader. The characters themselves are also the embodiment of demonstrative intentions, and are for the most part rather flimsily constructed. The lyricism, on the other hand, whether it develops social themes and rouses the fear of smouldering rebellion, or pours itself forth with greater freedom in the joy

his works

After the years of his struggles he lived to be a quiet man and an optimist. His imagination, still dominant, now gives itself play in calling up historical or legendary scenes, he still weights his novels with theses, but they deal now with less

any-

At

f the animal and vegetable worlds—still stir to enthusiasm his soul athirst for wonder.

[1] Charlotte Brontë, the daughter of a curate of Irish extraction, was born at Bradford in 1816, and passed her youth in the industrial village of Haworth in Yorkshire, in the midst of a bleak countryside. Intellectually precocious like

novelty in the present case lies in the quality of
which thus shares its deeper secrets with the reader;
might also trace it to the fact of the author's being a
The femininity of the writer explains the delicacy whi
mingles with the ardour of sentiment in her studies
and the subtle essence of originality which is diffused
the substance of the emotions, and the very outlo
life. The pure and yet outspoken confessions cont
her pages inaugurate in England that free revelation
ment which for three-quarters of a century is to
special contribution of feminine literature to our kn
of the heart.

Passion, as we have it in the novels of Charlotte B
transfused through and through with the moral aus
a strong religious upbringing; it is coloured by a
yet sore from an experience in which hardly more t
painful side of human affection has been revealed.
the stern discipline of such a trial, Charlotte Brontë
instinctively and spontaneously to a self-expression
vealed her, no doubt, and the reserve of which restra
effusiveness without checking it; but free from mere
shorn of all ornament, and limited to a kind of sober
At the instance of the publishers, and in order to
public taste, there were added certain dramatic elen
a somewhat artificial and morbid kind, to whic
Eyre owes its least felicitous features, though not t
characteristic.

The other novels, less influenced by the search for
emotions, develop round one central theme—the ma
which subjugates the force of tenderness, be it hu
proud, in the love of woman, to the commanding
of a manly personality. This inevitable theme, in w
touch upon the secret of Charlotte Brontë's own life
room for deft psychological analyses and shrewd desc
Pictures of everyday life, even scenes from social h
a school in Brussels towards 1840, Yorkshire at the
the Luddite riots—add a concrete interest to *Villette* or
The spirit of these episodes is not always without its
Charlotte Brontë can handle irony at will; her satirica
of society on the Continent is not free from some
stiffness. Yet when all is said, these works with th
lessness are replete with a kind of sly fancy, a
sprightliness of mind; but even the charm of their

to be moulded by its own pure inspiration.

With the younger sister of Charlotte, Emily Brontë, we come upon a talent of stranger and perhaps rarer quality, whose first works are all we have before her premature death. There is no one after 1830 who so completely and boldly realizes the ideal of independence in thought, and freedom in spiritual life, which the emancipation of Romanticism had set forth. In the cruel seclusion to which fate and misfortune condemned her, she escapes from the trammels of daily life, and out of her solitary musings, in the heart of the wild moors, makes up the inner world of her mystic maidenhood. Her verse half reveals a conscious paganism, the revenge of

Her powerful novel, *Wuthering Heights*, where, unfortunately, it is impossible to reckon the exact contribution of her sister

worked out in wonderful relief, as if they had been borrowed from the most intimately known substance of reality. Her

it the same time

ing

would be out of place here to sum up the history of the Oxford movement. Its moral causes, its deeper significance, its connection with the whole of the idealistic reaction, are all that we need to emphasize. The birth of the movement can be traced to an inner decision, whereby a certain temperament of soul sets up its particular needs and its preferences as the guiding principle of its spiritual beliefs The type of mind that had been seeking

possesses in the highest degree qualities which, undoubtedly, are not the most common to his race, but with which many others before him were also endowed; he does not, again, show certain traits very frequently recognizable in the modern British character, but which are not the most essential; yet his nature as a whole conforms to the general type. Below the grace and the delicate changeful shades, one feels the robust make of his character. His dialectic nimbleness, his shrewdness and at the same time his ardour, the simple self-effusion which so intimately mixes up his personality with his ideas, had all belonged to the English mind at the time of its Elizabethan youth; this temperament had been hardened, narrowed, bound with conventions and reserves, by the stress of social discipline, and under the withering influence of a degenerate classicism. Just as the Romanticists had infused new life into literature by going back to fountain-heads of national tradition and feeling, so the theologians of the Oxford movement refreshed religious life by a return to a vitality stored in the past. This was exactly what the Methodists had done in their sphere. But the reform introduced by Newman and Pusey is different; it is more refined, more intellectual, more academic, and its scope is more widely human. As a man of free intelligence and keen sensibility, Newman traverses a kind of moral drama which as it enacts itself stage by stage, in a conscience such as his, untrammelled by any secondary preoccupation, comes to have a very general significance and bearing. The emotion which that drama stirred in the public mind was due to a widespread realization that a first-rate thinker had investigated, as far as was humanly possible, a problem of universal importance, and had put forward a solution at once courageous and frank.

Newman devoted several works to the definite support of this solution. First of all, he takes his standpoint on the ground of history; like so many of his compatriots, he is respectful of the claims of tradition. After having endeavoured to justify the Anglican compromise by representing it as a judicious mean between extreme errors, he must surrender to what becomes for him an urgent truth: that the continuity of ordination claimed by the Church of England is not valid; and that with the Roman Catholic clergy alone lies the preservation and the transmission of this privilege of the Apostles. Henceforward he submits to the discipline of Rome, reconciling obedience and humility with a moral inde-

pendence which remains the stamp of his origin; he does not therefore, find a peace unalloyed with bitterness in his new

with the

ieet with

lives of

saints, or veritable novels, in which the fight which he had had to wage is told under the guise of fiction; or in directing attacks against the critical principle of Protestantism.

But the original contribution of his thought is a theory of religious belief

the Christian

brought forwa

current in his

remains entirely subjective, and induces the heart to signify its assent, without any intervention of judgment in its well-defined modes. It was not by a blind instinct that Newman

against the purely rational attitude of mind, which as early as the middle years of the century was opening the way for the new mysticism of its last decades.

The psychologist in Newman is inseparable from the moralist and the preacher. It is his insight into consciousness that allows him either to throw light upon character, or to create persuasion. He has a delicate, almost feminine

association of all these gifts explains the singular interest of his *Apologia*, the most widely read of his works, that confession in which the moving sincerity of the tone, and the reserve in the revelation of self, are welded into such a finely tempered whole.

The diction of Newman has strength, elegance, and suppleness. He knows how to use irony, and his eloquence is by no means restricted in range; a brilliant polemist, capable of driving a nervous and pressing offensive, he shows a preference

for the warm oratorical style; though his rhetoric never appears artificial, because of the ardour which sustains the spontaneous elevation of the language. His thought naturally moves at a quick, animated gait; he excels in explaining the conflicts of the heart or the most subtle theological discussions with nobility as well as with clearness. During the nineteenth century there was no one in England, among believers, who gave so human a touch to the technicalities of religious problems, or made them more accessible to all.

Newman sums up in himself the literary brilliance of the Oxford movement. The other converts are somewhat lost in his radiant fame.[1] When the cleavage took place between the two unequal groups of thinkers—on one hand those who, in their disquietude of mind and eagerness for thoroughgoing beliefs, pushed their principles to the logical end, and followed them even into the fold of Roman Catholicism; on the other the advocates of compromise, who remained faithful to their Church, and brought influence to bear upon Anglicanism from within—it was clear that this outburst of zeal, and exaltation of religion, was really not so very different, in nature or in result, from those which previous centuries had witnessed. The Ritualist movement gradually renewed the ways of worship, and stimulated religious feeling, even in social circles very far removed from its original centre. In this respect its action must be regarded as a component force in the neo-Romantic movement which developed after 1870, one element of which was to be a renascence of religious fervour, while another would inversely be the spread of moral anguish and of the suffering born of unbelief.

5. *The Aesthetic Revival: Ruskin.*—As soon as the new features of the Victorian age had fully developed, a revolt against ugliness grew to a head and found expression, in unison with the grievances of moral idealism, of humanitarian sensibility, and of faith. The industrial age had founded itself on the cult of quantity. In the resulting civilization, the religion of pure quality had no place. The craving for the beautiful in daily life was no less generally or cruelly thwarted

[1] John Keble (1792–1866), cleric, poet, theologian, inaugurated the Oxford movement in 1833 by a sermon on 'National Apostasy.' He published in 1827 a collection of religious verse, *The Ch*[illegible] (1800–82) was the outstanding figure am[illegible] George Ward (1812–82) wrote *The Idea*[illegible] followed Newman in his conversion. Of [illegible] worthy are Richard Hurrell Froude (1803–36), Frederick Oakeley (1802–80), and Isaac Williams (1802–65).

than were the need of an inner nobleness or the longing for a heart at peace. No doubt, art and literature were honoured. But as measured by the scale of uncompromising instincts, the respect shown them was superficial, insincere, or vain. For this respect did not permeate the whole of life; it was of no avail again
vulgarity in the
of such starved
the spiritual aspect of souls, that the artist's gaze would meet only with distressing sights, and he would find himself deprived of his indispensable nourishment.

Aesthetically considered, the features of society had always been mediocre; but this mediocrity was now set off and made

desire for a better life assumed the form of a regret; and all the beauty which the present was lacking shed its glory, by a natural reaction, over the past.

Romanticism had already known this impassioned return of imagination towards bygone ages. The artistic revival, no less closely than the other aspects of the idealistic movement, was bound up with the Romantic inspiration, which to all intents was now becoming a spent force in the literary field, but whose secret energy was continuing and proclaiming itself. After the supple, fresh, poetic realism of Constable's landscapes, we must wait until after 1830 for the great riots of light and colour where the brush of Turner reveals the passion of his impressionist and even symbolist art; and painting, as in its turn, but at a later date, it passes through the very same phases as poetry, thus finds its Shelley after its Wordsworth. In their aesthetic theory and their deliberate worship of the beautiful, both Pre-Raphaelitism and the gospel of Ruskin are the vigorous offshoots of Romanticism, whose sap is their vitalizing element.

But this sap had in itself the power of fertilizing different germs, and the two branches of the movement underwent different growths. The beautiful may be chiefly perceived by

us as a sensuous appeal, or as a call to our faculty of worship. According to the various temperaments and circumstances, the cult of art will tend towards a detached self-sufficing sensuality, or towards a spiritual religion. English literature from 1800 to 1830 had already illustrated these neighbouring tendencies, which are indeed so intimately bound up one with the other as to render separation scarcely possible. The work of Keats in its entirety breathes a rapture of the senses, a transport of soul, that finds its full satisfaction in the voluptuousness of nature, or in the entrancing imaginative aspects of the human world. That rapture had fed on the past of history or of legend. In the themes of antiquity or of the Middle Ages there was a very special force of suggestion; the modes of a former life were idealized by their very remoteness; they were looked upon as possessing either an incomparable wealth of beauty, or an attractive and picturesque simplicity, which one of refined taste must relish even more, because he would thus feel the supreme pleasure of obtaining partly through himself, and through his own effort, a gratification the more enjoyable for being more largely self-created.

The aestheticism of Keats was a first sketch of what, a generation later, becomes Pre-Raphaelitism. This doctrine bears the stamp of a more intellectual period, when art, more conscious of itself, works by principle, and will load its effects with subtle intentions. In it the rationalist atmosphere of the Victorian era pervades even the efforts of sensibility and imagination to escape from the tyranny of a reason which has become too positive. Compared with the broad current of Romanticism, Pre-Raphaelitism thus seems to be little more than an impoverished stream, receding farther and farther from the fountain-heads of inspiration, and wasting itself in the sands of artifice or preciosity. It tends to condense, particularize, and limit what was already the passionate quest of the beautiful in its more intense forms, with a clearly marked preference for the archaic and the pure. It is a sect, and has its initiated adepts. The cardinal desire which animates it is frankly aimed at the past; it centres round the imitation of a certain spirit, as represented by a school of early painters. Its main focus is in the revival of art; but it exercises a very direct and close influence on literature. It allows one ideal to radiate through methods of expression similar though different. Its disciples find their leader in Dante Gabriel Rossetti, a painter and a poet. It is when

dealing with poetry that the historian of literature must study Pre-Raphaelitism.[1]

here, not that of the lovers to whom sensual beauty means everything; it is the tradition of Blake and Wordsworth, not that of Keats. And just as English Romanticism was much

it draws its inspiration from deeper currents of British thought; it better expresses the permanent needs of its idealism.

Ruskin was mentally a self-made man, and his doctrine proceeds directly from instinct. From the first his susceptibility

[1] See below, Chap. IV, sect. 4.

copied whenever attentive observation is an act of faith, a dutiful acknowledging of Providence, the recognition of the irreducible difference which exists between the individual wealth of concrete forms and the relative poverty of forms evolved by reason; but details have no value in themselves, and a doctrine whereby art is tied down to a cold, cruel, or mean precision is an error, the sure sign of a hidden corruption. Thus the principles of Ruskin can be explained only in the light of the Puritan influences which transfuse his whole being and through which his logic is unconsciously refracted. By the various needs of his sensibility, the Pre-Raphaelite dogma of minute accuracy in details is reconciled with the cult of Turner, the most impetuously subjective of artists, and with a scornful condemnation of the most decidedly realistic schools.

The reason is that aesthetic activity is not an end in itself. Beauty is the flower-like expression of a divine soul which lives in nature, and which gives to every being its form, the index to its function. The full development of this form corresponds to the full exercise of the function; and thus beauty is the sign of an harmonious accord with the will of Providence. There exists, therefore, an inner bond linking up the happy blossoming of every creature with its physical and moral well-being; and as the human arts all imply the existence of collective relationships, it is the healthy vigour, or in other words the moral purity, of social groups, which supports the brilliance of the great artistic epochs. There are virtues behind the strong and faithful adaptations, the bold or shrewd inventions, which give all monuments their solidity, their sublimity, or their elegance; and the 'seven lamps of architecture' are essentially spiritual. The anonymous builders of the Gothic churches threw into their task a conscientiousness out of which grew the perfect workmanship of their handicraft; and the aspiration which sustains the pointed rise of the ogive, just like the naïve naturalism which adorns it with carved leaves and field flowers, owes its unequalled fecundity to the sincere fervour of a religious age.

And so the rock polished by the waters, the mountain with its load of forests and snow, and its murmur of many torrents, the crystal, the fern, and the face of man, all speak a symbolical language, which the artist interprets; the past history of the earth, the energies of matter and life, the promises of the the spiritual future, are there disclosed to the seeing eye; to

translate them into a more explicit language is to create the beautiful.

In

th

heroism, pursued even when success and riches has been achieved. The profusion, the abounding joy of her stones enclose a wisdom, a truth, a moral balance; they are the hymn

colours. The architecture of the doges' palace is still uncorrupted. Is there not a faith in it, the childlike pure love of all God's creatures; and a suppleness, an elasticity, some irregularity? Everything Venetian, in later years, degenerates at the same time; and the style of the monuments, the

to survive.

A mind roused by the meditation of the sacred laws which preside over the production of the beautiful, and which keep intact the power of creating it, was to shirk no issue that his apostolate might raise; the prophet of a social gospel was latent in the aesthetician. From the day when Ruskin

moralist had overlooked because he transcended them with his keen metaphysical intuition. What was wanted so that mankind might be governed by healthful rhythms, out of which beauty in art and life might blossom of itself, was a justice, a charity, a simple dignity in the relationship of man

with man, which the whole movement of modern times h tended to destroy, and from which it was daily receding farth There was great truth, therefore, in Carlyle's saying that soul of society was diseased; but the ugliness of an industr world and the selfishness of the economic order went no l to prove it than the anarchy of the Parliamentary system. was a question *not only of authority being restored*, but of being actively and generously efficient; a bold and strenu effort was necessary, so that the whole method of the p duction and distribution of wealth might be changed.

Thus was brought about the crusade in which Ruskin nounced the age of machinery, which made the workman slave to the tool; the spirit of individualism, which justifie heartlessness reprobated alike by religious duty and by hum feeling; the law of supply and demand, which fixed prices pitting rival egoisms against each other. If there is no wea but life, then all political economy is an abdication of hum spirituality before the fact of animality. In other domai *mind had conquered matter*, or *was locked with it in an eter* struggle through which it was itself refined; its duty, here well, was to fight.

The plans for fundamental reform at which Ruskin tri his hand are inconsistent and vague. Laying stress at or on authority, the family and religion as practical ideals, th develop the organic principles of order and solidarity which had laid down in common with Carlyle. In certain directio where he attempted to obtain solutions that would be i mediately put into practice, his effort to all appearances h not been less sterile; but his general intuitions possessed fertility which experience has already placed beyond all dou The *humanizing of industry by the re-establishment of t* small workshop, and by renouncing all over-elaborate for of mechanism, may have remained a dream; it is an id which cannot be put aside; and in other ways, it seems as the facts themselves were tending in its direction. The cent faith which animates this doctrine is a powerful advoca of citizenship through the cult of service; in this form, th faith has permeated practice in a measure which is as y incomplete, but is still increasing. Ruskin takes his pla beside Carlyle among the great regenerators of the conscie in a social sense, and of the national vitality itself.

His work thus had, and still has, an *influence on the dee* resolves and the acts of a people, which exceeds the lim

of mere literary popularity. Its artistic merit, as well, will assure its survival, despite the fact that its quality is not always equal or unexceptionable. Ruskin improved upon the example set by Landor, De Quincey, and the Romantic renovators of English prose; he still increased the range of its effects, by adding to harmony and animation the resources of the richest imagination and colouring. Always poetic, his style is not always in perfect taste; it shows at times oratorical cadences, a superabundant wealth of words, and superfluous ornaments. The impression of a too continuous and pressing eloquence which it leaves with the reader is bound up with the very sincerity of a zeal which is never half in earnest, whatever conviction it may adopt. This rhetoric, and this monotony, do not, however, take away their charm or their overpowering force from Ruskin's magnificent evocations, from his grand landscapes, transfused with the spirit of the highest pantheistic sublimity, nor even from his passages of masterly analysis, with all their picturesque precision of touch, their energy in the handling of detail. On the other hand, an inherent diffuseness, an inability to develop his thought in a meditated and steady order, detract somewhat from the convincing value of the impassioned arguments in which the apostle pours his heart out. Through this exuberance of rhythmic and sonorous language there runs a more familiar, more spontaneous vein. that of some works, like the [illegible] where the artist, no longer strained, instead [illegible] upon the accumulated [illegible] ncies

[illegible] Cambridge History of English Literature, [illegible] p. XII, [illegible] III; Cazamian, Roman social, 1903, [illegible] La Peinture [illegible] ry of [illegible] Lord [illegible], 1924; [illegible] Renais- [illegible] ictorian [illegible] Era, 1910

CHAPTER IV

THE POETRY OF THE VICTORIAN ERA

1. *Principal Themes of Inspiration.*—The poetry of the Victorian age—that of the middle part of the century, between the first Romanticism which fills its beginning, and the second which precedes its end—is woven of the two main strands of thought and feeling which run through the central period; that poetry finds its proper perspective on the intricate, shifting background of their interplay. The inspiration of each individual poet can be described more precisely in relation to those broad lines of development.

Viewed as a whole, the display of poetic talent during these years is as prolific as it is subtly varied in the wide range of its colouring. One can, however, distinguish in it two groups of poets; they are not divided because of any well-defined antagonism—indeed, they are united by many intermediary shades; but one group rather seeks to identify itself with the contemporary movement in intellectual and critical thought, stressing the need for objectivity, and aiming at a standard of balance, based upon the quality of precision in each idea; while the other group seems to favour the idealistic reaction with its desire for emotion, its cult of beauty, and its dreamy tendency, weaving the main themes of vision round the subtle blending of imagination and sensibility. From the point of view of general literary history, the first group logically precedes the second, explaining, so to speak, and determining its existence, just as action naturally precedes reaction. The Victorian age is above all characterized by an intellectual and positive movement. But poetry is not always the surest, nor the most minutely accurate, symptom of the evolution of mind. Compared with other forms of art, it may show an appreciable backwardness; it is the privileged domain of conservative tendencies. In fact, the poets of the second group occupy a position of slight priority with relation to those of the first. A student who keeps chronology in mind will begin his examination with them.

The reason is that the idealistic reaction does not constitute an absolute beginning; in many respects it represents the

natural, direct continuation of Romanticism. Neither i literature nor in the inner life of the soul can it be said tha

scarcely a poet from now onwards who does not reveal, i some degree, the reciprocal penetration and fusion of th influences in conflict.

There is an element of Romanticism in all the Victoria poets. With many, this remains their strongest and mos obvious characteristic. But the spiritual change that ha taken place and the atmosphere of a different age give thei art another aspect. The new features are either a mor strongly disciplined manner, a more elaborate perfection o the form; or a more spontaneous sympathy with emotion which seem to exclude the Romantic obsession of self; o again, a stringent intellectualism which colours the highes flights of the imagination. In the same way, the poets wh show most clearly in their work the decline of purely Romanti themes no doubt derive their inspiration from the restles activity of the mind; they are occupied with mere truth philosophy and psychology appeal to them; their poems ar analyses, demonstrations, into which one feels that scienc

words that seem to be but the echo of those of yesterday. In view, therefore, of the very varied and mixed tendencie

iters and

but this

eave full

scope to the study of individual temperaments.

2. *Tennyson.*—If the poets of the Victorian era had to be grouped round two central figures, one of these would be Tennyson[1] and the other Browning. Tradition has estab-

lished this parallel and, one might say, imposed it. To avoid it altogether would seem tempting; but it fits in too well with the main lines of the present study not to be adopted here.

Tennyson shares much more than his contemporary Browning in the direct prolongation of Romanticism. Not only do his early ventures show him to be imbued by the influence of his great predecessors, but he will never deny them. Even to the very close of his long career, his mental attitude will not cease to be characterized by a sensibility which reacts to the stimulus of things, and which takes itself for their measure. His poetry, even when it is dramatic, will always be, as with Hugo, the sonorous echo of his own soul. But, on the other hand, he follows the evolution of the century, adapting himself to the principal changes it brings with it, in a spirit that is neither too passive nor too stubborn. He is aware of all the new influences at work in the atmosphere of his epoch, some of which stimulate his moral convictions and prejudices, whilst others damp them. He feels the tremendous attraction of science and critical thought, and yields to it or, more often, fights against it, thus taking up, of necessity, the attitude of the abstract thinker. From the point of view of the animating force as well as of the essential intentions which shape his work, Tennyson must be classed with the supporters of intuitionalism, in the wake of Carlyle and Ruskin. He knows that his spiritualistic beliefs are menaced, and so he becomes their defender. He has a philosophy, therefore: that of an age when faith is the prize of victory, and remains open to obsessing doubts.

He is not less a Victorian by the quality of his expression. While Romanticism had tended rather to lay stress on spon-

---

King (1859–89) was universal. Besides the publication of numerous poems (*Enoch Arden*, 1864; *Ballads*, 1880; *Tiresias*, 1885; *Demeter*, 1889; *The Death of Œnone*, 1892, etc.), he wrote dramas (*Harold*, 1877; *The Cup*, 1881; *Becket*, 1884, etc.), several of which were successfully performed. Raised to the peerage in 1884, he died in 1892, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. *Poems*, ed. by Hallam Lord Tennyson, 9 vols., 1907–8; *In Memoriam*, ed. by Robinson, 1901; ed. by Percival, 1907; *Maud*, ed. by Wordsworth, 1899; *Idylls of the King*, ed. by Wheeler, 1913; *Enoch Arden*, ed. by Beljame, 1892; ed. by Marwick, 1914. See biography by Hallam, Lord Tennyson, 1897; studies by Waugh, 1893; Van Dyke, 1898; Lang (Modern English Writers), 1901; Lyall (English Men of Letters), 1902; Bradley (*Commentary on In Memoriam*), 1902; Benson (Little Biographies), 1904; Dhaleine (*A Study on Tennyson's Idylls of the King*), 1905; Lauvrière (*Repetition and Parallelism in Tennyson*), 1910; Lounsbury (*Life and Times of Tennyson*, 1915); Roz (Grands Écrivains étrangers), 1911; Baker (*Concordance to Poetical and Dramatic Works*), 1914; Fausset, 1923; Nicolson, 1923; C. G. H. Japikse (*The Dramas of Lord Tennyson*), 1927; A. Noyes, 1932; L. Cazamian, *In Memoriam, etc.* (*trad. et introd. critique*), 1938

probably too severe. His art retains a sufficient sincerity of tone, it is supported by a sufficiently vigorous truth of feeling, to render acceptable the elaborate elegance of his style. His work as a whole will assuredly keep its appeal, and not be relegated to the class of writings with a refined but ephemeral brilliance.

His early poems show him to be a master in a facile, graceful, and harmonious key, supple enough yet to try his hand in various ways, but lacking still the strength of personality necessary to allay the misgivings roused by his dazzling cleverness. In these first efforts he deals in word-painting and delightful harmonies; he shows exquisite feeling for the music of syllables and the charm of imagery. In some of the poems, one can feel suggestions from Shelley, Keats, or Coleridge. In others we catch the glow of a poetic impressionability, of a gift for visionary and mystical effects, revealing the innermost soul of a temperament that, beneath the outward show of a well-balanced art, strives to conceal the feverish agitation of an almost morbid mind. But a common feature of all the poems is that caressing music of the melody, that unerring felicity in the metrical translation of feelings, which are from the point of view of poetic style, if not from that of lyrical expression, a contribution worthy of the most talented artists.

The collection of pieces published by Tennyson in 1842 shows the poet in the full command of his first style. His inspiration finds vent in a rich blending of Romantic subjectivism with an objective interest in the changes wrought by time among men and ideas, a blend which represents the new spirit of a century of criticism and history. In his own way he is experiencing the almost universal desire to go beyond the limits of self, and so he borrows his themes from the present, from the Middle Ages, from classical antiquity, from legend or fancy as well as from reality. But his capacity for vicarious experience is limited; he revives only the emotions with which he can identify himself, and thus the personal note is always and everywhere in evidence. It is this personality which reduces the most opposite of tonalities, brilliant or subdued, to a sort of serene equality, and bathes them in the calm of quiet thoughtfulness. It is also the force at work, transfusing every subject he treats of with a kind of inherent moral idealism; and this springs from the noble exaltation as well as the suppressed anguish of an inner eagerness, fed, even at this date, by experience, by meditation and suffering. The most

outstanding traits in this early period of his art are the brilliant and, one might say, the chosen quality of the imagination, at once fresh, full of life, and rich rather than sensual or plastic; and the variety of the rhythms, which associate a masterly liberty in effects with an extreme severity in prosodic feeling. But at the same time the poet seeks to amplify his ex-

but which have the actual power of an immaterial suggestion.

With *The Princess* and *In Memoriam* the poetry of Tennyson

other hand the charm of the scenic descriptions tends to eclipse the rather fictitious dramatic action, borne up by characters who are too obviously the puppets of theory. And yet, the descriptive or emotional lyricism in the poem de-

the summit of his endeavours. There are weak points in the poem—a certain monotony, a rhythmic plan which in its

typical product of Victorian art. Here we have the triumph of an idealization by principle which seeks for beauty in refinement, and which, to veil the crude elements of passion

ardour of the feelings, the rich light as from a stained-glass window which suffuses the whole work, all suggest the contemporary painting of Rossetti and Burne-Jones. During this phase of his career Tennyson fell a victim to the fascina-

musician in language, has never been more exquisite. But at the same time one cannot forget the essential artificiality of this imaginative epic, at once mystical and moralizing. It destroys the original character which the poetic instinct of

Once again he takes up the ancient and classical, or idyllic and English, themes of his first collections, and treats them in a sober style which often reaches to virility. At the same time the feeling in them shows a tendency towards sadness. *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After* is the singularly frank con-

sketches, the poems written in a rustic vein, whose language

is mixed with dialect; the occasional pieces in which the poet laureate gives national pride some of its highest expressions; the dramas, of which several still are staged: highly polished works these, devoid of any deep dramatic life, but not destitute of merit in their pathos and psychology, and showing a moral quality which is never other than noble.

To sum up, the impression left by Tennyson is more substantial and varied than the reader might be led to expect from the impoverished stylization of his genius, which the poet himself no doubt was responsible for and encouraged, but of which he has been the victim. As the finest example of a culture that is too wise, too scrupulous and conscientious, to countenance any imprudence on the part of the artistic imagination—even that imprudence which is a condition of the most fruitful endeavours—Tennyson is still near enough to the elementary forces of Romanticism to retain much of their creative energy; and the delicacy of his taste so genuinely reflects the purity of his spiritualized nature, that he runs no risk of enervating poetry while idealizing it. He has in him strains of passion, of disquietude, as well as germs of instability; and they undoubtedly appear through the outer polish of his art as a contradiction. But if the substance of his work is thus less homogeneous, on the other hand the writer becomes more human and more true to life. Tennyson pre-eminently represents Victorian literature, a privilege which to-day is in the eyes of many one of his shortcomings; the time will come, no doubt, when impartial criticism will judge him not as the greatest poet, but as the most admirable artist of the nineteenth century in England, inferior only in this respect to what Keats gave promise of, and at rare moments came to achieve.

One can count all the more firmly on a reaction of public opinion in his favour, as the vein of his genius is distinctly national, and he has voiced better than any other the instincts, feelings, and preferences which have never ceased to feed the moral personality of the English people. One thing alone might detract from the value of this claim, and that would be the decisive establishment of a European culture; even then Tennyson would remain the most faithful echo of the original voice of a nation. He is not only British, but insular. To this fact he owes a certain narrowness of outlook; but on the other hand he gains therefrom an incomparable plenitude and sureness in the intuition of the deep attachment of his

race to traditions, to feelings, and to horizons, of whi
has known how to reveal the ineradicable force, the fresh
and the tranquillity.

3. *Beddoes, Hood, Elliott, etc.*—The brief and tragic c
of Beddoes [1] shows clearly how inexact it would be to
about 1830 the actual end of Romanticism. Impreg
to the innermost core of his being with that form of r
disquietude which the weak and nervous creatures c
nations had experienced, he owed it to his temper, when
germs of disorder were deeper and more organic, to re
attuned to it, in an epoch during which the spirit no l
blew that way. His work, unequal in many respects, re
however, a pathetic and touching interest. Several o
lyrical poems have an inspired flow, a poignant melanc
which recall a Shelley. His best drama, *Death's Jest I*
is perhaps the most astonishing miracle of that intr
divination which revived the spirit of the Elizabethan th
among certain privileged writers of the nineteenth cen
And if the daring of the imagination, the spontane
figurative quality of the language, the ease and streng
the rhythm, are made more intricate by a restless intelle
research, this philosophical preoccupation is brought
harmony with the passionate flight of an untrammelled ge
as in the work of a contemporary of Shakespeare. O
other hand, the obsession of mystery, of terror, of grue
details, the fascination of death, together with a trac
Mephistophelean irony, seem to indicate the influenc
continental Romanticism and of German literature.[2]

The figure of Hood [3] is not less suggestive. He could c

[1] Thomas Lovell Beddoes, born in 1803, studied medicine at Göttingen
wandering life in Germany and Switzerland, poisoned himself in 1849. [illegible]
poems, *The Improvisatore* (1821), *The Bride's Tragedy* (1822); a drama, *I*
Jest Book, and other poems, etc., appeared after his death (1850-1). [illegible]

[illegible]

[2] [illegible]

[3] [illegible]

a glimpse of Keats, and his early poetry is steeped in the radiation of that remembrance. His life is one long story of suffering, fraught with troubles, and he appears to have been a creature singled out by fate for affliction. The Romanticism of emotion is deeply rooted in his nature, and indeed represents his true temperament as well as his experience of life. Like others of the same sensitive disposition, however, he has the gift of sparkling humour, and no one with the exception of his friend Lamb has redeemed the impudence of his puns with so rich a display of original imagination. His humour was more successful than his pathos, and it was by holding a brief as a jester that Hood managed to earn from the public a less scanty living. But before his death he returned to themes where he was truest to himself, investing his verse with the deep note of true emotion; on such work his reputation rests to-day.

In *The Song of the Shirt* and *The Bridge of Sighs*, the Romantic feeling of individual suffering is extended into social compassion. Thus these two poems reveal a transition parallel to that in the novels of Dickens and Kingsley. Such pieces, where the poignant force of feeling is not always clothed in faultless form, and several shorter but perfect masterpieces, whose appeal recalls Wordsworth with an even more tender touch, give the literary figure of Hood a characteristic feature: the feminine delicacy of one who through suffering is forced back into himself, there to discover in intuitive perception and sympathy the source of a deep simplicity which is equal to the greatest art.

It is also to his social inspiration that Elliott[1] owes the survival of his work, in itself rather uneven. It reveals, even at this late date, abundant traces of the phraseology and rhythms of the eighteenth century. His vehement emotion is usually unable to create for itself an original expression; but some of his political poems are irresistibly powerful and generous. His work evinces as well the rudiments of a distinct talent for description. His landscapes, and his rustic

a poor man, amid the most cruel suffering. *Poetical Works*, ed. by Jerrold, 1906; *Works*, 11 vols., 1832–4. See Jerrold, *Thomas Hood, his Life and Times*, 1907; Oswald, *Thomas Hood und die soziale Tendenzdichtung*, 1904.

[1] Ebenezer Elliott (1781–1849), born in Yorkshire, the son of a manufacturer, was an iron-merchant by trade in Sheffield; published descriptive verse, *The Vernal Walk* (1801), *Night* (1818), etc.; but owed his popularity to his *Corn-Law Rhymes* (1831), in which he denounced the egoism of the legal measures taken against the importation of foreign cereals. *Works*, 2 vols., 1876. See Watkins, *Life, Poetry, and Letters of Ebenezer Elliott*, 1850.

and the magnetism of his innate enthusiasm explain the foremost place he occupies, not only at the heart of the Pre-Raphaelite movement after 1850, but also in the first beginnings of that diffuse aestheticism which was to be one of the features of the closing years of the century. He himself has realized a type of existence in which the only principle is that of art, and he has given a concrete proof of its unity His Italian blood is the source of his outstanding originality. To it he owes the strength and keenness of his sensations, the need and the cult of form, the certainty of an inherent purity in passion. He is a stranger to the hesitations of a divided northern soul, when it comes up against the apparent conflict of the flesh and the spirit.

But his plastic imagination did not find perfect satisfaction either in form or in colour. His half-English heredity and the influence of the moral environment in which his whole life was spent perhaps explain, in his temperament, the influx of a mystic idealism, whose expression tends to be symbolic. In his poetry as in his painting, he gradually drifted away from the realism of his early years.

And in symbolism we have the key to the true character of his work. He is drawn towards it, from the first poem in which he reveals his style, *The Blessed Damozel*, to the powerful, gloomy visions of *The Cloud Confines*. And thus intellectuality comes to penetrate what is primarily another conquest of Romanticism, a new application of feeling, grown supreme, to the adjoining domains of literature and aesthetics. Rossetti is the necessary link of communication between two Romantic movements, one of which ebbs away after the first thirty years of the century, while the other rises again in the last three decades. To him it was given to unite them; and in his personality they are associated with the needs properly belonging to the more intellectual period which intervenes. While he experiences to the full the influence of Keats, he is not impervious to that of Browning.

He was conscious of this, and always insisted upon the

---

translations from the Italian (*Dante and his Circle*, 1874), published *Ballads and Sonnets* (1881), and died in 1882. *Collected Works*, ed. by W. M. Rossetti, 1886; *Works*, with notes, ed. by W. M. Rossetti, 1911; *House of Life*, ed. by P. F. Baum, 1929. See biography by Knight, 1887; biography and letters, ed. by W. M. Rossetti, 1895; the reminiscences of Holman Hunt (*Pre-Raphaelitism, etc.*), 1905; the studies by Sarrazin (*Poètes modernes d'Angleterre*), 1885; Benson (English Men of Letters), 1904; Mourey, 1909; Mrs. Boas, 1914; Dupré (*Un Italien d'Angleterre, etc.*), 1921; R. L. Mégroz, 1925; E. Waugh, 1928.

indispensable part played by the intellect in art. Poetical Pre-Raphaelitism, as he practised it, consists in an attitude of the artist, and a system of expression. The attitude is that of ecstasy, or of an emotion deep enough to offer the characteristics of religious worship, while passion itself is sublimated into a spiritual exaltation. There is a persuasive atmosphere of calm about this emotion, because it is deep and controlled; nothing betrays its intensity, save an occasional turn in the words employed, a tone, an insisting stress, which suffuses with meaning even the simplest expression. These general features are associated with an extremely lucid but intermittent power of attention, which, suddenly aware of some particular aspect of reality, brings it into extraordinary relief, endowing it with a wonderful implicit value. And as the aspects chosen are in nearly every case particular—trifling details, fleeting or subtle impressions—the closeness of the vision, and the fidelity of the descriptive talent, recall in the writings of Rossetti all the minute realism of Raphael's predecessors in painting.

Intensity here is not expressed directly, but by means of exterior signs. We must reflect in order to perceive it. Its expression is thus submitted to an intellectual process, and undergoes a transposition. His poetry has lived on the search after subtle suggestions, most often of a mystic or tragic nature. Its rare quality is to be found in the *intimate* union, with this element of subtlety, of an ardour which wholly exhausts the force of the emotions, and widens their [illegible]

expression, the power of what remains implicit, the only force able to infuse new life into effects which pure Romanticism in its day had exhausted. Rossetti more than any other poet sought the magic key to true poetry in the spell which allows [illegible]

of passionate love, at once sensual and intoxicated with a

philosophical mysticism, has never been treated with more sumptuous variety and wealth, in a more subtle and fuller symphony of all the powers of man. His language is the instrument of a music more often liquid than sonorous: it is coloured or, more often, bathed in a pale spirituality; it rings with an eloquence that is powerfully implicit, and at the same time has a suggestive appeal to all the susceptibilities of the soul. When he sometimes attempts to imitate the style of ancient ballads, if he fails to give an impression of simple strength, of nervous rapidity, and to create the real atmosphere of medieval times, he at least succeeds in skilfully condensing into stanzas of powerful imagery the uninterrupted sequence of a dramatic story, embodying the idea and realization of an overshadowing destiny (*The White Ship*, *The King's Tragedy*, etc.) He is a little artificial in the use of his burdens; but, as in *Sister Helen*, his artificiality is felicitous.

Quite other is the temperament of William Morris,[1] writer, artist, and reformer. In him Pre-Raphaelitism is coloured by a nature whose instincts are more broadly English. His imagination fills out the frail forms characteristic of primitive painting; he delights in unfolding broad canvases where languorous effects are bathed in an atmosphere of serenity.

[1] William Morris, born in 1834, near London, studied at Oxford, was influenced by the Tractarians and Rossetti, and with the painter Burne-Jones became one of the central figures of a group of ardent aesthetes (The Brotherhood) whose organ was *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856); in it Morris published poems and prose tales. Renouncing an ecclesiastical career he studied painting, and in 1861 became the inspiring mind in a firm of decorative art, where by his manifold activities he brought about a transformation
in furnishing, etc., during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century
His work as a writer continued in the publication of verse: *The Defence o*
Guinevere and Other Poems, 1858; *The Life and Death of Jason*, 1867; *Th*
Earthly Paradise, 1868–70; *Love is Enough*, 1872; *Poems by the Way*, 189
etc.; in poetical translations of the classics: the *Aeneid* and the *Odyssey*, 186
or of French: *Old French Romances*, 1896; while his taste for northern lite
ture inspired *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung*, etc. (in verse), 1877; translati
in prose (individual or in collaboration): *Grettir Saga*, 1869; *Volsunga Sa*
1870; *Three Northern Love Stories*, 1875; *The Saga Library*, 1891–5; *The*
of Beowulf, 1895, etc. A convert to Socialism, he criticized his age in p
where are revealed his dreams of the future: *A Dream of John Ball*, *etc.*, 1
News from Nowhere, 1891, etc. Establishing a printing press in his man
Kelmscott he produced art editions. From his pen we have also a ser
imaginative tales: *The Roots of the Mountains*, 1880; *The Wood beyo*
World, 1894; *The Well at the World's End*, 1896; *The Sundering Flood*, 189
He died in 1896. *Collected Works*, ed. by May Morris, 24 vols., 191
Cheap editions of most of his works are obtainable. See the biograp
studies by Mackail (*Life of William Morris*, 1899; *William Morris*
Circle, 1907); Vallance, 1897; Clutton-Brock (*William Morris, his W*
Influence, 1897); Drinkwater (*William Morris, a Critical Study*, 1912);
1913; Vidalenc (in *Art et Esthétique*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1920).

sential spirit of Romanticism. While at Oxford he was brought into touch with the Anglican renascence; he read and admired Carlyle and Ruskin; Tennyson became a very god for him; and in the first poems of Rossetti he experienced the

cated or the simple stanza, are all united in one absorbing

The poetry of Morris is for the most part a succession of pictures, forming a vista of great and seemingly inexhaustible wealth. They are drawn from every point of the human horizon, from the past as from the present, but perhaps mostly from the lands of legendary or mysterious beauty; from the fable and from classical antiquity, above all from the chivalric tales and adventures of the Middle Ages, for those were the

the wayside—such are his themes. But in spite of their variety, there is one general quality which is common to them all, and that is their Romantic colouring. They all seem to weave themselves into a vast tapestry, an ornamental decoration of artistic beauty, wrought by an imagination that is enthralled by the phantasmagoria of the ages. And all the figures who meet there are bathed in a fresh, pensive, flower-like beauty; they convey the impression of souls whose spiritual destiny has brought with it a mysterious strength and a spontaneous grace; a strange light, an almost melancholy serenity seems to hover in their looks, whether they be heroes or traitors or maidens or lovers. And it is this air of sad reflection visible even beneath the smile, and haunting every portrait from the poet's pen, that reveals the general dominant tone of all his reverie: the feeling of voluptuous delight mingled with the bitterness gathered from the flight of time; and a sense of the bewildering confusion of reality and dreams, creating an atmosphere of constant semi-hallucination.

For this reason it is that his most dramatic pictures convey the impression of remoteness from actuality. In *The Earthly Paradise* he almost created a masterpiece. He gave the succession of the months and the changing temper of the year as a background to twenty-four tales, twelve of which are taken from antiquity and twelve from the Middle Ages. These with their interludes compose a very harmonious and delightful poem; but something is wanting in it: the direct appeal of the emotion to the heart. It remains remote from human nature; passion, suffering, and conflict are seen as through a strange haze which dims the perspective of everything, and clothes the whole in a glow as soft as that which lights us in our dreams. Such a realm as this is not one where the keenest and deepest inspiration can exist. The narrative art just as the charm of description is here employed solely as the instrument of a general suggestion, to which the poet's instinctive skill is untiringly applied, and which belongs, here again, to the category of symbolism. The material world vanishes, to be replaced by a vision of beauty composed of joy and sadness; the whole thing is artificial, although the setting is that of nature; its contours may be definite enough, but the atmosphere is mysterious and misty. This magic touch of the modern impressionist in Morris sets his tales in a totally different sphere from that of Chaucer.

his temperament. Instead of the over-refinement strung to a keen pitch of nervous intensity, and fused with all the ardour of the south, which he found in Pre-Raphaelitism, this northern literature revealed to Morris a warlike savagery, violent passions, and a strong, but rough imagination. By obeying the dictates of his instinct in its search for compensation, he satisfied a considerable part of his moral self; namely, the affinity and sympathy he felt for Anglo-Saxon tradition and

in his moral development. But even in this new domain he cannot be other than the aesthete, imbued to the core with Latin culture. As before in his preferential quest of medieval

with the larger vision of epic greatness; he can introduce the dramatic element; he can make the issue depend upon the

guorous atmosphere of the south. Themes familiar to the reader of to-day are treated here with skilful fidelity; the wilder elements are allowed to come to the fore, but are discreetly

interpreted. The language, noble without affectation, jars in no way with the Germanic character of the legend, because the poet has shown a decided preference for Saxon words, and made a frequent use of composite terms, archaic phrases and expressions, which for the most part are successful. But the real merit of the form is to be found in the rhythm, in the rhyming anapaestic couplets of six accents; this regular cadence, supple, unrestrained, and marvellously springy, gives the story its fascination, and almost eliminates the danger of monotony in its somewhat long development.

The love of adventure, the attraction of an imaginary world, where beautiful human lives bloom out in open nature and unrestricted liberty, where unhappiness, suffering, and death have themselves a dignity unknown in our industrial civilization, have inspired the romancer as much as the poet in Morris. Or rather we may say that the tales of his later years are poems in prose, simple in style and yet musical. The charm in great part springs from their indefiniteness; their remote atmosphere soothes the aching of a mind galled by the tyranny of a vulgar present.

It is also the reaction of a wounded sensibility against the ugliness of the real that has stimulated the apostolic teaching of the socialist in Morris. He actively put his beliefs to practice, and gave the best proof of their sincerity; they withstood the trial of time, the jeers of scepticism, the mediocrity of narrow-mindedness of many of the people with whom they brought him into contact. His experience in this connection was decisive, for he found in his faith a satisfaction too deeply based upon the conception of justice and the love of humanity, to allow of any disillusionment. *A Dream of John Ball* is a brief evocation of the obscure suffering of mankind in the past, of the fruitful ferment of revolt, of the progress which would make a better order of things possible, of the gap which still separates us from the fulfilment of this ideal, and of the necessary effort required to attain to it. The work is written in a language of moving racy appeal, which lends beauty to the generous note of fraternal sympathy, as well as to the bitterness of a courageous political criticism. *News from Nowhere* is the most enchanting of Utopias; the one which keeps farthest removed from material means of realization, and from the genesis of the new world. With the unerring touch made possible only through the vision of a poet, it shows us the fulfilment of our best hopes and purest wishes, of the fondest

and oldest dreams of mankind. And this ideal state seems quite within our reach, in all its concreteness, with its passion that knows no cruelty, and its griefs that are without the [illegible] ion of happiness and brotherly [illegible] nd, cured of all yearning for [illegible] ever beautiful scenery of the earth transformed into a free natural garden. No English [illegible]

[illegible]

our longing for improvement, our eternal need of change and inquiry.

While the literary activities of Morris are vast, they form only one part of his life's work. Much of his strength was employed in another sphere, where his noble ideals in art came into contact with the resistance of matter. He was a decorative painter in stained glass, in tapestry, in cloth, in paper-hangings; he founded a printing establishment, from the presses of which have come many beautiful works of art; and [illegible]

[illegible] s

propounded the principles and given the example of a conscientious technique, and a true inspiration, open at once to the present and its newest teaching, and to those unduly neglected lessons of the medieval artists. In the designing of furniture as of ornaments, and the general setting of the domestic interior, he has been the chief individual source of European transformation. The various recent attempts to [illegible]

[illegible]

5. *Christina Rossetti; Coventry Patmore; Mrs. Browning* — In Christina Rossetti[1] we have a personality, retiring and

[illegible]

meditative, wrapped up in the modesty of feminine feelings and religious austerity. Her work is to be found scattered in a host of fragmentary poems, which represent momentary effusions in the life of her soul; she seeks to conceal rather than reveal herself, and leaves it thus to the reader to penetrate beneath the surface of her verse. Her work as a whole will scarcely be lasting; it has dry pages; yet there is in it an abundance of the freshest flowers, modest perhaps, but of a delicate perfume, which, once breathed, will haunt the memory of the reader.

She belongs to a tradition, however; her poetry pulsates with the spirit of impassioned Romanticism. But a veil of feminine reserve and of piety interposes itself between her heart and her words. The interest of her life is centred in religion; she is swayed by earnest moral thoughts, and by an ardent, though almost familiar, mysticism, which brings with it no mental disturbance. Despite the predominance of faith in her inspiration, her best pages are not those devoted to sacred themes. There is something too orthodox and sober in her devotion to inspire a poetry of great personality. Her continual meditation on death—a subject after her own heart—brings into her work a monotonous note, but it is of wider appeal.

The inner life of which we thus catch a glimpse is that of a proud, passionate, pure soul which has experienced every emotion, even that of earthly love, but which has never entirely yielded itself to any; a soul which, if it finds contentment in divine love, does not wish to give too great expression to its joy, so much is asceticism a part of its nature. Sensitive in disposition, however, responsive to the influences of seasons and circumstances, she lends herself to the emotions of her joyless life, and expresses them in verse of crystalline purity, whose musical sonority is clear, though a trifle thin.

The most substantial of her poems are allegories in which we watch a curiously imaginative mind at work, weaving out of an exclusively psychological sensuality an exuberance of description, and toning down the passionate element to innocent caresses, whilst the conscience, secretly astir, is preoccupied with moral ends, and interprets itself by a kind of gracious symbolism. *Goblin Market* is a delightful fairy tale.

1904; *Poems* (selected), ed. idem, 1904. See D. M. Stuart, *Christina Rossetti* (English Men of Letters), 1930; E. Birkhead, *C. Rossetti and her Poetry*, 1931; F. Shove, *C. Rossetti*, 1931; E. W. Thomas, *C. G. Rossetti*, 1931.

The charm of a childish invention, and the gay spirit which animates this airy fantasy, serve to conceal a theme of graver import: the dread of sensual folly, and the severity inherent in a *doctrine* of sacrifice and renunciation.

In this early work, it is manifest that Christina Rossetti still [illegible] in the quality of the form she employs; she [illegible] But [illegible] st the painstaking effort of the stylist, [illegible] its are more and more *concentrated* upon using the most *simple* means. Her delicate and shifting impressions are conveyed in a language of easy flow, and develop with the semblance of absolute spontaneity. The vigorous note, the *accentuated* tone are rare, or scarcely perceptible; and yet the rhythm and the melody of the words are powerfully expressive. Many of these effusions, *in their sweetness* and direct sincerity, have an undernote of grief which would recall the touch of Verlaine, had not the poetess been careful to restrain and curb the elements of morbid melancholy and regret, as soon as these tend to appear. Their momentary presence, however, leaves a tremor rippling over the smooth and limpid surface of her style. This pure *form of poetry permits* of artistic elegance in only one sense—that of the naturally varied prosodiacal measure. The sonnets, of too easy and flowing a nature to possess any *strong* structural beauty, are nevertheless attractive by their soft colouring and elegiac tenderness. It is to her nobility of soul, which never seeks to abuse a natural gift of eloquence, or overstep the truth of her inspired fervour, that Christina Rossetti owes the dignity and charm of her literary personality.

[illegible] religious sentiment that gives unity to *the* [illegible]

[1] *Coventry Patmore* (1823–96) [illegible] *The Angel in the House* (I. *The Betrothal*; II. *The Espousals*), 1854–6, *The Unknown Eros and Other Odes*, 1877. *Poems*, ed. by Champneys, 1906, *The Angel, etc.*, introduction by Mrs. Meynell, 1905. See biography and correspondence, by Champneys, 1901; studies by Gosse, 1905; Burdett, 1921.

As Tennyson had shown, no theme comes nearer to expressing certain deep-rooted desires of the modern English soul, or its resolution to beautify with pious reverence the emotions and episodes which lead to the union of two lives. The subject of betrothal and marriage had been coloured by the Victorian public with a kind of complacent sentimentalism, in which certain national preferences came to the fore. The intimate pictures drawn by Patmore have a grace both warm and voluptuous, beneath their somewhat conventional respectability. In the flights of his imagination, he combines an ardour and an eagerness which can transfigure the realities of the home; but such flights are regrettably short. His diction shows delicacy, and his verse is skilfully adapted to subjects sometimes of the simplest order; but he does not always avoid a false elegance of style, a prosaic form of expression, the abuse of broken cadences; in trying to weave a poetic halo round the familiar aspects of middle-class life, he has been courageous enough, but too often his talent cannot rise above the mediocre atmosphere of his subject. One might single out as his best work the purely lyrical poems—the odes, which are decidedly less popular, and somewhat laboured, but which open wide horizons, show a wonderful wealth of rhythmic devices, and continue the traditions of the great English visionaries.

The early work of Mrs. Browning [1] did not give promise of a great poetess. In her first manner she shows a docile nature, trying to find itself, remembering, imitating much. For antiquity and for Greece she displays a youthful en-

[1] Elizabeth Barrett, born in 1806 in the north of England, the daughter of a rich landowner, studied the ancient classics, began writing at an early age, and made her first venture in 1819 in an epic poem: *The Battle of Marathon*; published *An Essay on Mind and Other Poems* (anon.), 1826; a translation of Æschylus: *Prometheus Bound*, 1835; *The Seraphim and Other Poems*, 1838. Of delicate constitution, she lived the life of a recluse in London, contributing to periodicals certain poems, a collection of which (*A Drama of Exile*, 1845) brought her fame. In 1845 she met Robert Browning, married him in 1846 in spite of her father's opposition, and spent the greater part of her married life in Italy. She published *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, 1847; *Casa Guidi Windows*, 1851; *Aurora Leigh*, 1857; *Poems before Congress*, 1860. She died in 1861; her last works appeared in 1862. *Complete Poems*, 1904; *Poetical Works*, Oxford ed., 1910; *Aurora Leigh*, ed. by Forman, 1899. *The Love Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Browning* were published in 1899 (2 vols.). See biographies or studies by Ingram (Eminent Women Series), 1888; Montégut (*Ecrivains modernes d'Angleterre*, 2nd series, 1883); Merlette (*Vie et œuvre de Elizabeth Browning*), 19[illegible] (*Elizabeth Browning, femme et poète*), 1912; Texte (*Études de* [illegible] 1898; N. A. Bald (*Women Writers of the Nineteenth Cen*[illegible], 19[illegible] (Representative Women Series), 1928.

thusiasm; she is decidedly fond of all that savours of the didactic; and thus her verse tends towards a kind of belated pseudo-classicism, in which are mingled the influences of pe, Byron, and Campbell. *The Battle of Marathon* and *An say on Mind* are little else than the first attempts of a ilous schoolgirl, who is still under the spell of eighteenth-ntury diction, rhetoric, and rhythm. But her tempera-nt had in it the germs of a sincere Romanticism of the otions, which grew by degrees; and imitation had its share this development, but her own spontaneity is felt in it as ll. Here and there we catch a personal note or a salient it. Her mystical dramas, *The Seraphim* and *A Drama of ile,*

rs I

m

rks have a power that cannot be mistaken. In places she

traced in the development of her personality. After an

del is Coleridge rather than Shelley or Keats. In *The mmaunt of Margret, Isobel's Child*, the *Rhyme of the Duchess*

iration. In these poems there are only the elements of an iginal personality, traceable in various evocations, landscape

to her nature, is soaked in intellectuality. For the literary ideal she sets herself is still didactic, oratorical, and erudite. Possessing such mixed tendencies, it is no wonder that she should find herself perfectly adapted to the atmosphere of the Victorian age. She does not need to impose herself upon the public; her great success is almost immediate. Yet her lyrical poems are marred by a persistent vein of scholarly allusions, of abstract or forced language, and of jarring verse, which, running through the very core of her poetry, crops up all too often, and allows itself but too rarely to be forgotten.

Her poetry therefore finds its purest effusion in those moments of surrender to emotion or unrestrained passion, when feeling at its strongest exclusively directs and creates the song of the soul. To such moments belong elegies of instantaneous indignation, as *The Cry of the Children*, or of grieved sympathy, as *Cowper's Grave*; above all, the admirable series of *Sonnets from the Portuguese*, where an ecstatic love, at once grateful and still penetrated by the thought of death, blossoms out into mystic adoration, in one of the finest offertories which have ever given utterance to a soul bestowing itself unreservedly.

The most important work from the pen of Mrs. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*, presents a problem that is ever new: the conflict in verse-writing between independence of thought on the one hand, and the demands of form on the other. This philosophical novel develops with a force, and an impatience of all verbal restraint, which in a sense are justified by the warmth of the inspiration, and by the life of a mind to which all crises appeal, whether those of the social order or of modern faith. There is in it a feeling of the inner tragedies of the soul, rich and deep enough to give rise to genuine moral pathos and moving sublimity. Besides, the writer's imagination does not remain dormant; it spreads over the events, and even over the reflections which often interrupt their course, the breadth of nature, in the charm of its rugged or softened aspects. Even the freedom of the blank verse contributes happily to the varied movement of the tale, as it passes on from the things of everyday life to the heights of a glowing idealism. But the texture of the work is not woven closely enough; its constituent elements lack coherence and fusion; there is too much dross in it, too many prosaisms, lapses into the commonplace, unfortunate liberties in the phrasing; and the measure, swept along with over-feverish

and enticing confession of a poetess with a generous heart.

it in our day.

6. *Bailey; Clough; Matthew Arnold; FitzGerald.*—At the same time as Victorian poetry draws much of its inspiration from an ever-flourishing Romanticism, it can also lay claim to a type of verse the central motive of which is rather intellectual. This age was engrossed in the preoccupation of the ultimate problems of life. *In Memoriam* and *Aurora*

expression.

In this respect Bailey [1] is a transitional poet, for a feverish Romanticism fans into a glow the metaphysical musings of his *Festus*.

Although this work was planned independently, it nevertheless reflects the genius of Goethe, whom Bailey intended to

the dreadful monotony of Bailey's blank verse. Despit obscurity, the poet's thought may not be lacking in bre of outlook; but the form in which he clothes it, with a *naïveté*, its clumsiness, its prosaism, is totally unaccept: Only a public with little critical judgment could accept one for the sake of the other.[1]

It is in a very different tonality that the philosophic pc of Clough and Arnold attempts to perform the miracu feat of reconciling passion with clear thinking into a sl lived union.

With Clough [2] one must admit that the attempt is unsuc ful. He is one of those writers who solicit the reader's : pathy by the power of a sincere and lofty thought, but a artist he is incomplete. The fact that his work rem the cult of a discreet and restricted circle of admirers, sl how great an appeal can be made to the English mind strength of character and the frank discussion of moral p lems. To those consciences which are free from prejudice not from uneasiness he speaks in a somewhat austere, direct language; and it is enough.

The work of Clough supplies, as it were, an historical d ment in the progress of ideas. His is the generation w received the full shock of the new religious doubts. Attra for a brief spell by Newman's group, Clough reasserts hi dividuality and turns towards the 'Broad Church.' His sweeps away all dogma, and centres its belief in the recogn of duty and in the intuition of the divine. Such is the sc of that spontaneous gladness of soul, that sane outlool courageous and infectious; to his inner candour, and tc

[1] *The Mystic* is quite unreadable and lapses into mere literary path It is interesting to study, side by side with Bailey, the 'spasmodic' of Sydney Thompson Dobell (1824–74; *Balder*, 1854); the verse of Alex Smith (1830–67; *A Life Drama*, 1853, etc.); and the epic poem of R Hengist Horne (1803–84), *Orion* (1843, new ed. 1929), where the thou difficult to understand but rich, the form at times brilliant (other v *Cosmo de' Medici*, *The Death of Marlowe*, dramas, 1837; *A New Spirit Age*, social studies, 1844, etc.).

[2] Arthur Hugh Clough, born in 1819 in Liverpool, the son of a mer studied at Rugby under Thomas Arnold, and later at Oxford; was influ by Newman, then turned towards a faith of free religious principles occupied several university posts, travelled on the Continent, and d Florence in 1856, after having published: *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, *Amours de Voyage*, 1849; *Dipsychus*, 1850. *Poems and Prose Remains* ed. by his wife, 1869; *Poems*, ed. by Milford, 1910; ed. by Whibley, 1913 studies by Waddington, 1882; Lutonsky, 1912; Stopford Brooke (*Clough* 1913; Guyot (*Essai sur la formation philosophique du poète A. H. Cl* 1319; J. I. Osborne, 1920.

doubts which remain part of his nature, he owes, however, a tenor of soul more responsively human, and more flexibly supple. It cannot be said that he never knew the peace of the mind, but it is also true that he never ceased to seek it.

de Voyage is a very prosaic novel in verse. In *Dipsychus* we have a work of strange conception, of substance and interest, where the author deals with problems which are never out of date. No one in England has expressed more clearly than Clough the essential hesitation in modern thought, nor the conflict between the intellectualism of pure philosophy and the ever-ready adaptation which is the law of practical life. Here, again, there is the suspicion of a certain parallelism with the subject of *Faust*, but it keeps within acceptable limits. In a series of episodes, the meaning of which appears clearly

cadence. Yet it is in this work that Clough gives most successfully his original note as a poet—in the animation, the gaiety, the humour of the narrative; in a freshness and a

otherwise clumsy, and allowed a halting inspiration to soar. Several of the shorter poems, in the form of confessions and effusions, have also this redeeming grace; their language is one of imagery, where the nobleness of the ideas is worthily expressed in verse at once sedate and beautiful

With Matthew Arnold[1] beauty was more consciously the object of a desire and a cult. He had the fine sensibility of

[1] For the life, etc., of Matthew Arnold, see above, Book vi, Chap II, sect. 5.

the scholar, and his mind was deeply impregnate teaching of ancient art. His imagination fondl Greek scenes and times; under the direct influ lenism, he formed an ideal of sober and pure si made it the constant model of his style. With Arnold combined the serious note of deep refl was his as well. His poetry bears the stamp of in and no writer better represents the new characte torian age, in its contrast with the Romantic per was well aware of what set him apart from Byron and expressed it himself. Did not their impas betray too keenly the emotion which fired their Arnold's days the poet has acquired a certain reserve; he can now modulate his voice and discip while his intelligence like a prism refracts and passion. To him the wild disorder of Romantici replaced by a clear architecture, the design of wh borrowed from the classical writers, those masters sense of balance.

At once a poet and a philosopher, he thus war to be moulded after a strong traditional fashio Greeks—Sophocles, Homer, and Epictetus—t chose are among the calmest of the recent prop worth, who built up and willed his moral life sorrowful but stoical in his despair. These c fluences, acting upon a temperament more gifte than in creation, stimulated him to flights of p thought out and full of substance, condensed selected words, and swayed by an exacting sens and fitness.

The poetical work of Arnold is not absolutely rank of English literature. It has the somewhat of a deliberate impulse to write, and very sel suggest an inevitable effusion. But in the or sophical poetry it occupies a prominent place, th not owe it to its most ambitious efforts, or its tentions.

A great part of this work may be classed as o and refined, but slightly artificial; it is that which of the humanist or the thinker deprived of all w Many of the shorter poems of moral analysis dissertations in verse; they have elegance and p their sobriety is bought at the price of a prosaic d

language, his delicate emotions, and all that background of

their solid merits, Arnold's epic, tragic, or mythological poems have lost the prestige which lately enshrouded them. A

with the

es up for

shall continue to be read because of its inner Romanticism, which precisely was what the poet sternly tried to repress. A repression, no doubt, that nevertheless bore fruit, and that adds a dignity to his more discreet avowals; an inevitable repression as well, which would never have been tolerated by

The true note of Arnold's temperament is sadness: a pensive melancholy, essentially Romantic in origin, which gains sterner tones from the more definite anxieties of the century, now more sedate and mature. Here again, as in the case of

all his philosophical reflection tends, seems to
inner self an emptiness, a scar which is reve
poetry. The loss of all positive belief came a
experience to him as to many of his generation
destroyed all his joy of life. We thus catch a
the pessimism of an age suspended in uncerta
world which has passed out of existence and o
yet formed; and this pessimism is destined s
and colour the last years of the century. Arn
forerunners of what will prove to be a contag
in the province of letters as well as in that of f

And it is the presence of this metaphysical
guish which gives the note of eloquence to the
his poems. In *Dover Beach* it is clearly percep
it is hidden, and mixed with the regret awaken
of a friend; while in *The Forsaken Merman*
more elusive, undistinguishable from a fancif
From the same source comes the poignan
occasionally felt in the stanzas inspired b
Chartreuse, or by the memory of Sénancour.
The Scholar Gipsy, the great modern melancho
and spiritualized into a symbol of mystery a
poetry of Arnold strikes its most original and i

By a concidence natural enough, the sincerit
brings to their greatest degree of efficiency
vention and fastidious choice which impart its
to the art of Arnold. The delicate achievement
talent gave a felicitous, an easy and graceful e
confession of his incurable nostalgia. His fee
is rich with suggestions, refined by the infl
Greek landscape; it is almost always associ
emotion of the past, the keen intuitive sense
time; and the forests, the rocks of the Alpi
noble meadow-lands or the mystic sunsets see
bourhood of Oxford, are coloured in his p
indefinable pathos which only memory an
quality of things can inspire.

These short poems come very near to what
fection in philosophical poetry. Their rhythm
and yet not over-elaborate construction, and th
sureness of touch, along with an Attic elegance
which runs a modern vein of more intense sug

charm; for the inherent value of the idea is brought out by a wealth of artistry, in which the magic force of the words,

intellectual, and calmly pathetic, combines an imaginative Romanticism with the discipline of a sober form. By a unique stroke of fortune, the translation of the medieval Persian quatrains, modernized with bold yet delicate skill, moulded

the setting, exact and yet toned down, together with the inspiring power of the rhythm, is a miracle of refined literary adaptation; and the art which has formed and condensed each pearl in this poetic necklace, which has also polished them and

exemplifies one of the dominant tendencies of Victorian poetry, and probably the more important one, because it comes nearer to expressing the originality of the period: the craving for analysis and moral criticism. Browning's art is entirely pervaded by intellectual curiosity, and almost merged in the systematic quest of truth; it is parted from what is essential in pure science only by secondary intentions. The poet in whom this age was longest in recognizing itself is the one who best answered, not as Tennyson to its easier and emotional genius, but to its intense desire for rationality in religious beliefs and in life.

He began by deeply receiving the influences of Romanticism; Shelley was to him a divine model. But very soon, the ardour of imagination and feeling was invested in him with a new intensity—the exalted consciousness of self, which develops into a penetrating, insistent, and complex psychological reflection, and finally becomes a philosophy, a direct analysis of the working of the mind, not viewed in its concrete quality, as with Wordsworth, but reduced to an interplay of ideas. One cannot say that *Pauline* is a lyrical effusion; it is rather the strange confession of a writer who makes the state of his romantic soul the object of his study. In *Paracelsus* we have the tumultuous and superabundant outpouring of a doctrine which, grown impatient of all restraint, tries to express itself fully; it seethes within the drama of a single life. In this work, the personality of Browning is seen to be already formed; but the exuberance of youth is still perceptible in the more spon-

Book (1868–9). From then onwards he was recognized by a wide *élite* and was the recipient of national honours. He published numerous poems and collections of verse: *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, 1871; *Fifine at the Fair*, 1872; *The Inn Album*, 1875; *Pacchiarotto*, 1876; *La Saisiaz*, 1878; *Dramatic Idyls*, 1879–80; *Ferishtah's Fancies*, 1884; *Asolando*, 1889. He died at Venice in 1889 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. *Complete Poetical Works*, ed. by Birrell, 1915; *Poems*, Oxford ed., 1905; *Works*, Centenary ed. 1912, etc.; *Sordello*, ed. by Whyte, 1913; *The Ring and the Book*, ed. by Dowden, 1912; *Essay on Shelley*, ed. by Garnett, 1914. See the biographies or studies by Symons (*Introduction to the Study of Browning*), 1886, new ed., 1906; Sharp (Great Writers), 1890; Jones (*Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*), 1891; Brooke (*Poetry of Robert Browning*), 1902; Mrs. Orr (*A Handbook to the Works of Robert Browning*), 1902; Dowden (*Life of Robert Browning*), 1904; Herford (Modern English Writers), 1905; Chesterton (English Men of Letters), 1908; Berger (*Quelques aspects de la Foi moderne dans les poèmes de Robert Browning*), 1907; idem (*Robert Browning*), 1912; Griffin and Minchin (*Life of Robert Browning*), 1910; Lounsbury (*Early Literary Career of Browning*), 1912; Phelps (*Browning, how to know him*), 1915; F. M. Sim (*Robert Browning, Poet and Philosopher*), 1924; P. de Reul (*L'Art et la pensée de Robert Browning*), 1929; H. Brocher (*Jeunesse de Browning*), 1930; A. A. Brockington (*Browning and the Twentieth Century*), 1932; W. C. de Vane (*A Browning Handbook*), 1935; L. Cazamian, *Hommes et Femmes* (*Men and Women*), 1938.

taneous flight of the imagination, in the full and cadenced notes, bearing the traces of an eloquent and musical ideal which he will abandon from now onwards. His original features will become more and more prominent, but he will never again show more truly his poetical genius.

In *Sordello*, the last of these early attempts, we find such a strong reaction against the survival of a rhetoric which no longer answers the intentions of the poet, such a decided

[illegible]

the language loses its aesthetic quality by developing overmuch its value as an intellectual sign. This work cannot be called a poem; rather it is a confused series of invitations to probe and penetrate the subtleties of the writer's mind. A thesis is unfolded by means of a symbolical tale, which under the mesh-work of so many abstract relations comes to be almost lost to view.

Browning recognized, however, that he had gone too far. The work of his more mature years follows a middle course,

[illegible]

Personae, etc.), or grouped in series around a central theme (as in *The Ring and the Book*), there is one single method applied throughout, with a resolution which shows that the poet is sure of the resources at his command. His object, according to his own definition, is the study of incidents which go to compose the development of a soul. In his opinion there is little else that merits serious consideration.

Browning's typical form, that towards which all the other forms may be said to converge, is the monologue; there properly resides the newness of his art. His main idea is to throw light upon the realm of consciousness, and to do this he frees himself from all the shackles which impede psychological analysis, whether they are connected with action and

exemplifies one of the dominant tendencies of Victorian po
and probably the more important one, because it comes n
to expressing the originality of the period: the cravin
analysis and moral criticism. Browning's art is ent
pervaded by intellectual curiosity, and almost merged i
systematic quest of truth; it is parted from what is essent
pure science only by secondary intentions. The poet in w
this age was longest in recognizing itself is the one who
answered, not as Tennyson to its easier and emotional ge
but to its intense desire for rationality in religious beliefs
in life.

He began by deeply receiving the influences of Ro
ticism; Shelley was to him a divine model. But very soon
ardour of imagination and feeling was invested in him w
new intensity—the exalted consciousness of self, which
velops into a penetrating, insistent, and complex psycholo
reflection, and finally becomes a philosophy, a direct ana
of the working of the mind, not viewed in its concrete qua
as with Wordsworth, but reduced to an interplay of i
One cannot say that *Pauline* is a lyrical effusion; it is ra
the strange confession of a writer who makes the state o
romantic soul the object of his study. In *Paracelsus* we
the tumultuous and superabundant outpouring of a doc
which, grown impatient of all restraint, tries to express
fully; it seethes within the drama of a single life. In this w
the personality of Browning is seen to be already formed
the exuberance of youth is still perceptible in the more s

Book (1868–9). From then onwards he was recognized by a wide *éli*
was the recipient of national honours. He published numerous poem
collections of verse: *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, 1871; *Fifine at the*
1872; *The Inn Album*, 1875; *Pacchiarotto*, 1876; *La Saisiaz*, 1878; *Dr*
Idyls, 1879–80; *Ferishtah's Fancies*, 1884; *Asolando*, 1889. He died at
in 1889 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. *Complete Poetical Wor*
by Birrell, 1915; *Poems*, Oxford ed., 1905; *Works*, Centenary ed. 1912,
Sordello, ed. by Whyte, 1913; *The Ring and the Book*, ed. by Dowden,
Essay on Shelley, ed. by Garnett, 1914. See the biographies or studi
Symons (*Introduction to the Study of Browning*), 1886, new ed., 1906;
(Great Writers), 1890; Jones (*Browning as a Philosophical and Rel*
Teacher), 1891; Brooke (*Poetry of Robert Browning*), 1902; Mrs. Orr (*A*
book to the Works of Robert Browning), 1902; Dowden (*Life of Robert Brow*
1904; Herford (Modern English Writers), 1905; Chesterton (English M
Letters), 1908; Berger (*Quelques aspects de la Foi moderne dans les poè*
Robert Browning), 1907; idem (*Robert Browning*), 1912; Griffin and M
(*Life of Robert Browning*), 1910; Lounsbury (*Early Literary Career of Brow*
1912; Phelps (*Browning, how to know him*), 1915; F. M. Sim (*Robert Bro*
Poet and Philosopher), 1924; P. de Reul (*L'Art et la pensée de Robert Brow*
1929; H. Brocher (*Jeunesse de Browning*), 1930; A. A. Brockington (*Bro*
and the Twentieth Century), 1932; W. C. de Vane (*A Browning Handbook*),
L. Cazamian, *Hommes et Femmes* (*Men and Women*), 1938.

taneous flight of the imagination, in the full and cadenced notes, bearing the traces of an eloquent and musical ideal which he will abandon from now onwards. His original features will become more and more prominent, but he will never again show more truly his poetical genius.

In *Sordello*, the last of these early attempts, we find such a strong reaction against the survival of a rhetoric which no longer answers the intentions of the poet, such a decided [illegible] that the expression becomes overcharged and burdened, and [illegible] probe and penetrate the subtleties of the writer's mind. A thesis is unfolded by means of a symbolical tale, which under the mesh-work of so many abstract relations comes to be almost lost to view.

Browning recognized, however, that he had gone too far. The work of his more mature years follows a middle course, [illegible] different kinds of dramatic monologues, either separate (as *Dramatic Lyrics*, *Dramatic Romances*, *Men and Women*, *Dramatis Personae*, etc.), or grouped in series around a central theme (as in *The Ring and the Book*), there is one single method applied throughout, with a resolution which shows that the poet is sure of the resources at his command. His object, according to his own definition, is the study of incidents which go to compose the development of a soul. In his opinion there is little else that merits serious consideration.

Browning's typical form, that towards which all the other forms may be said to converge, is the monologue; there properly resides the newness of his art. His main idea is to throw light upon the realm of consciousness, and to do this he frees himself from all the shackles which impede psychological analysis, whether they are connected with action and

narration, or the laws of material probability, and the various occasions when the external world in actual life obstructs and and obscures that of the spirit. The novel and even the drama cannot but reserve an important, often a dominant place, for this element of circumstance. The psychologist finds full liberty only in the direct and individual expression of each being. The degree of clearness indispensable to this expression can be reached only through the actual hold which each personality has upon the states of its inner life. And as the psychologist's curiosity is infinite, Browning gives free vent to his imagination, roams through time and space, and selects in history and among the intense possibilities of life whatever cases attract him, either by their strong normality, or by virtue of their exceptional value; the common feature of all the characters chosen being the inherent complexity which they possess, and which they either realize themselves, or offer as a rich material to be exploited by the scrutinizing eye that can read them more clearly.

The fault of the method lies in this last point. It is very rarely that one can, or that one wants to, probe deeply into one's own consciousness. The monologue of classical tragedy had already fallen into discredit because of its artificiality. This kind of thinking aloud, meant to explain for the spectator's benefit a simple feeling or the moral position of an actor at a given time in the play, did not correspond very well to the illusion which the drama intended to create. But at least there was no attempt in this to explore all the inner being. It only aimed at revealing the secret of a certain attitude, the course and result of deliberation, at communicating verbally a factor of the situation which the plot did not actually display on the stage. Now in the monologue of Browning, infinitely more adaptable, and free from the conventional atmosphere as well as from the dialectics imposed by tradition on orthodox tragedy, there is no less artificiality; indeed there is more. His ambition is very much greater; he wants to investigate the whole province of the soul, and the interplay of its reactions to the influence of environment; the actual drama is left out; with the result that our knowledge of the facts, of the conflict, and of the other characters, comes to us by way of one single voice; all the multiplicity of reality is seen from one unique angle of vision. For this formula in art to work, we must frankly leave aside the idea of likelihood, and of anything appertaining to concrete life. We do not

hear the spontaneous utterance of a living being; it is not the soliloquy of a soul that we suddenly come upon; it is rather a self-disclosure in which we have the collaboration of an analyst [illegible]

moralist who is judging it. [illegible]

However moving, therefore, these studies may be, they are not [illegible] only rel[illegible] many-sid[illegible] well [illegible] precise colouring [illegible] At the heart of his [illegible] mankind, there is [illegible]

in vice and in crime, he cannot repress a strong repugnance which breaks out in the words he lends them, and secretly shapes their discourses. His traitors stand out on a back- [illegible]

even aggressive belief in spirituality and soul; a doctrine of love as the touchstone of men, and the foundation of their real value. Before such problems as that of immortality, Browning evinces the desire to believe, rather than actual faith. But his thinking is essentially positive, and Christian without being orthodox. And so he has become the recognized guide, the master of all who seek rationality and at the same time a creed; not only is he the prophet of a liberal religion, but his poetry has been an instrument of grace.

[illegible]

pleasure. He speaks to the intelligence, or to the imagination in its highest form, that imagination which can effect

we do not feel that we have before us a human soul unwittingly revealing itself, but a psychologist who is dissecting and a moralist who is judging it.

present the same central motive which animates the *Légende des Siècles*, that review of the ages and civilizations which was the natural outcome of a century of criticism and history. But this work is not, nor does he wish it to be, an impartial mirror of reality. There is always some moral preoccupation in his psychology. If he is describing souls that are steeped in vice and in crime, he cannot repress a strong repugnance which breaks out in the words he lends them, and secretly shapes their discourses. His traitors stand out on a background in which one can read an implicit condemnation; his pages radiate impassioned preferences. His intellectuality and his doubts affect only the superficial part of his beliefs, or that which he regards as such. At the core there is an invincible, even aggressive belief in spirituality and soul; a doctrine of love as the touchstone of men, and the foundation of their real value. Before such problems as that of immortality, Browning evinces the desire to believe, rather than actual

religion, but his poetry has been an instrument of grace.

Only intermittently is his verse a means of aesthetic enjoy-

syntheses, and group together related elements. With unlimited profusion, he gives us the joy of understanding and reconstructing characters; he makes us appreciate, better than any other writer of his time, the swarming variety of moral types. His portraits are admirable examples of penetration, strength, and delicate colouring. He vigorously emphasizes the dominant features, and indicates detail with a minute understanding of the individual trait. The same felicity of touch is to be found in his treatment of problems and theses. The relativity of perceptions, the distinct and interfering waves which the shock of a single event sends surging through various minds (*The Ring and the Book*); the chance influences which at every instant are diverting the course of our inner destinies (*Pippa Passes*); the awakening of the first vague religious emotion in the soul of a doctor who has been the captive of empiricism (*An Epistle of Karshish*); the grounds for belief of a common pragmatist type (*Bishop Blougram's Apology*)—these 'cases' among the best known present themselves to the mind. But there is no limit to the number of these small miracles of finesse and intuition; and the work of Browning is without doubt one of the richest and the most deep-reaching treatises in practical psychology that English literature has to offer, in a century when the novel, unstintingly and with such brilliancy, took upon itself the task of showing man what he really was.

To study things as they are, is the very end of scientific knowledge, in the broad sense in which the novel may pretend to figure among its instruments. Such a study is not and cannot be the main pursuit of poetry. Therefore, one might say that the error committed by Browning consists in having chosen paradoxically his means of expression. No fundamental necessity demanded that his analytical portraits, or his dissertations, should be expressed in verse. Still, one can suspect his reasons for desiring to retain, or in believing that he did retain, a poetical form. It is here not merely a case of passive fidelity to a tradition, though the eighteenth century had already presumed that moral analysis and rhythmic language go naturally hand in hand; nor is it the effect of a literary ambition which, taking shape as it did in the years of a romantic youth, did not change its name when it changed its object. If Browning continued all his life to put into verse themes which in themselves scarcely seem to call for this choice, it was not by obedience to a discipline accepted at

one time, and then become habitual. In reality, it can be traced to an instinct of liberty, and, one might venture to say, to the law of least resistance. The spirit of poetic style, when liberally interpreted, permits audacious or irregular expressions, inversions, ellipses, and a spontaneity in order and rhythm, which prose, more severe in its modesty, does not usually tolerate. [illegible]
his psychologica [illegible]
that was easy, [illegible]
similarly, to tra [illegible]
plex thought, h [illegible]
construction of sentences Only an artist of genius could have run this rebellious metal into the mould of prose. A poet of [illegible]

sophy.

The work of Browning, written in this original and mixed form, which is neither prose nor verse, often gives an impres- [illegible]

in English literature.

On the other hand, the unfortunate fact remains that, [illegible]

stance of his art is not fit for the communication of thought [illegible]

sterility and monotony of his style will reappear even in his most inspired pages.

He has, however, his actually inspired moods, when, under the spell of a more simple emotion, or of some striking symbol, powerful enough to call up and organize sounds and images, he reaches the heights of poetry, in the most precise sense of this term. Few are the poems which can be describes as flawless; but they strike an extraordinarily intense and poignant note in their charm, whose only fault is a touch of effort and strain.[1]

After the publication of *The Ring and the Book,* Browning is still himself; his moments of real, poetic inspiration became fewer, while his conversations and dissertations in verse on varied and strange subjects demand from his readers a more stoical courage than before. But his vigour of thought, his force of analysis, his gift of perceiving what the soul is, and of re-creating it, these retain their striking interest.

During his lifetime Browning had conquered the indifference of the public, and by now he has ceased to be a bugbear in literature. He is widely read; indeed, many of his poems have come to be looked upon as part of the general patrimony. His work resembles an imposing edifice, but all its parts are not equally strong. One-half will assuredly survive in the faithful study and worship of cultured readers; but it seems difficult to believe that posterity will not relegate the other half to the category of writings whose appeal is only to scholars and specialists.

To be consulted: J. W. Beach, *The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth Century English Poetry,* 1936; Berger, *Robert Browning,* 1921; F. Bickley, *The Pre-Raphaelite Comedy,* 1936; Stopford A. Brooke, *The Poetry of Robert Browning,* 1902; *Cambridge History of English Literature,* vol. xiii, Chaps. II, III, IV, V, VI, VII; Charpentier, *La Peinture anglaise* (n. d.); Elton, *Survey of English Literature, 1830–80,* 1920; Lounsbury, *Life and Times of Tennyson,* 1915; Mackail, *Life of William Morris,* 1899; Montégut, *Écriv. mod. de l'Angleterre,* 1885, etc.; Omond, *English Metrists,* 1921; Saintsbury, *History of English Prosody,* 1906; Sarrazin, *Poètes modernes d'Angleterre,* 1888; Verrier, *Essai sur les Principes de la Métrique anglaise,* 1909–10; Walker, *The Literature of the Victorian Era,* 1910.

[1] By way of examples, mention should be made, not of the popular *Evelyn Hope,* nor even of the equally popular *Love among the Ruins,* although both poems are expressively musical—but of *A Grammarian's Funeral,* in which a thought, a sentiment, and a rhythm have all been moulded together by the same creative act; or of the end of *Saul,* or of *Childe Roland,* which remain fixed in the memory because of their inner melody.

CHAPTER V

REALISM

as it were, the attitude of a writer; it is an effect as well as a cause; it is subservient to ideas, to motives of sentiment and principle, and these motives can be of extremely different character. There is scarcely any aesthetic intention which, if logically developed, may not lead to a more or less accentuated form of realism. It is clear, however, that in the unlimited range of artistic impulses there is a region which responds more especially to the realistic trend of creative effort; just as among theories of art there are some doctrines, the guiding principle of which is realism, and which aim at defining exactly the means of attaining to this form of artistic expression.

It is in this more precise and, in a way, specialized sense that realism during the Victorian era assumes the character of a typical and dominant tendency. What had long since

in the sphere of art—while, at the same time, they helped to

intellectual atmosphere where certain forms of physical knowledge, such as biology, were daily increasing their prestige and sphere of influence.

Naturalism implies an uncompromising logic in the extension of scientific positivism to literature proper, which was beyond the spontaneous instinct of the English mind. In England such a step had more difficulties to encounter than in France, because there was less initiative in the domain of theory, while certain prejudices, or a certain regard for modesty, were more strongly antagonistic to it. The strait-laced moral exigencies of the middle classes about 1850 had too strong an influence on public opinion to allow of such an extension; and the encouraging example of France, together with the relaxing of social discipline towards the last quarter of the century, counted for much in the appearance of naturalism in Victorian England. It came late, and therefore did not affect the period here under study. From 1832 to 1875, realism in England may be said to have developed under influences almost exclusively indigenous, keeping strictly within the limits of national tradition, such, at least, as the nineteenth century had set.

The taste for realistic expression was not confined to one branch of literature; its action was perceptible even in poetry. But by a natural affinity, the novel seemed to be the instrument best suited to the effort after truth, in the study or the artistic treatment of reality.

Again, during this period many varieties of realism came into prominence, springing from psychological motives which were foreign, or even hostile, to any rational attitude in the writer. Thus, the art and poetry of the Pre-Raphaelites, the social novel of Kingsley and Mrs. Gaskell, are, in certain respects, the products of realistic tendencies; and yet, by the spirit which animates them, they must be classed among the expressions of the idealistic revival. But among all the varieties of realism, there is one great group, relatively interconnected, which by virtue of its size, its interest, and its value as a symptom, takes a place of primal importance; it is that in which the desire for accuracy, stimulated by what is newest and keenest in the atmosphere of the time, claims as its justification the pleasure or the contentment inherent in the search for truth.

Although the realistic novel is not the most brilliant or the most inspiring province of Victorian literature, it is the one in

... this synthetic age ... acteristic formula, ... either at war with each other, or seeking to be reconciled, when a strong desire ... to effect such a reconcilia... akes its place between the ... ilosophy on the one hand, and the idealism of the heart on the other; though much closer to the former, it traces, as it were, a resultant line between those conflicting forces. Victorian literature has many extreme forms; if it had a point which could be termed central, and typical, that point would be found in the work of the writer just named.

2. *Thackeray*.—As far as can be judged, the realism of Thackeray[1] owes nothing to the influence of science or of philosophy. The air he breathes is charged with the diffuse positivism of a utilitarian age, but he never quotes it in support of his opinions; indeed, by his intentions and his conscious ideas, he would rather seem to be its avowed enemy. Between his guiding impulse and the spirit which governs the researches of a scholar, one can find only certain general analogies, such as the same need for clear-sightedness, and

[1] ... Thackeray, born in ... Calcutta, was the son ... [illegible]

... *Esmond*, 1852, *The Newcomes*, 1853–5, ... [illegible]

the same distrust of all that prejudice or sentiment h up and interposed between our eyes and the fact One side of his nature is in reaction against Romantic timental illusion, and the half-conscious deceit of ima He is thus virtually in harmony with a decisive re the part of literature and thought, to an ideal c and lucidity.

But this is the effect of a wholly instinctive pr Thackeray's mind has developed according to the la temperament. By birth he is essentially a realist others are born visionaries, or gifted with a strong feeling. His preferences are supported by max grounded on precedents; but this effort can scarcely to have brought him nearer George Eliot, or dire thoughts towards the future. It is the past which him, the tradition of the eighteenth century. He i a popularized and cheap Romanticism, and rather joining the long line of sensible, self-possessed writ before the frenzied outburst of the last generation, ha how to live and think and write in harmony with th and the world. Just as Fielding took his stand ove Richardson, so Thackeray stands for the open and sense in human nature, contrasted with a vulgari of Byronism.

These traits become prominent at an early date i eray's life. Already in his university days he is t skill in parody. The ten years just preceding the pu of *Vanity Fair* are occupied with a whole series of writings, hastily composed, varied in subject and unequal merit, but including certain parts which a superior. Their almost only source is the easy spo of the author's ironical verve. As with Fielding, af in all its forms is here aimed at: sentimentalism, socia the false philanthropy which brings into fashion murderers, the literary pretensions of a Bulwer, the a pride of a Disraeli. There is a mischievous touc observation of human follies, and, both as a writer caricaturist, he knows how to bring them into relie tered about, and published under various pseudony long series did not help in establishing the immedia tation of its author. *Vanity Fair* had to appear b general public became acquainted with his name. those early pages he had served his apprenticeship

learnt the art of constructing a tale, of sketching a character, *of writing in a style at once simple, natural,* and *of the* happiest spontaneity.

The themes of these essays can be grouped round three centres: conventional Romanticism, still lingering in the novel and melodrama; national idiosyncrasies, traceable in most [illegible] separate provinces belong to one and the same empire, that of insincerity, whose vast expanse had already been explored by Fielding.

At this date Thackeray is not a literary critic who takes himself very seriously, and it would be unjust to call him to account for his opinions, several of which are extremely superficial. The value of his early sallies resides in his very [illegible] *Book*, or of Irish character, as in the *Irish Sketch Book*, his [illegible] his own. Again, although he warmly appreciates *Irish good* humour, he does not go to the length of accepting, on its own value, or as having equal claims to consideration, the moral originality of a different people. But he cannot be held altogether responsible for his opinions in sketches such as these, which were written from day to day and without any general plan. Whatever their *limitations, they reveal the* mind of an inquiring observer, of a talented journalist, of a psychologist who displays no great depth and is certainly not infallible, but is endowed with a gift of amused, or already saddened, penetration

When Thackeray takes up the task of satirizing snobbery, he finds himself on favourite ground, and the quality of his work becomes appreciably stronger. From the beginning, he had always felt keenly the weakness of human character, when confronted with the claims of conventionality. His comic invention had led him to take pleasure in upsetting the sacred order of things; he had considered society, customs,

and even intellectual works, from the standpoint of a footmar Yellowplush; and his hero writes in a language full of th drollest of mistakes, but one feels that the irreverence has sting. *The Book of Snobs* is made up of chapters brough together without much of a general plan, and it has obviou faults. The very notion of snobbery is somewhat vague; gets broader and broader as the book unfolds itself; in th opening pages it represents the despicable veneration for wha is hollow and false; at the end, it resolves itself into all th moral imperfection of man. Irritated by the obsession o base flattery which he sees or suspects everywhere, Thackera attacks it with a humorous vigour which soon gives way to bitter indignation; as in the case of Swift, his reprobatio seems to ignore all bounds, and develops into an arraignmen of humanity as a whole. No longer differentiating betwee a self-interested humility on the one hand, and vital util tarianism on the other, the satirist proceeds to denounce th insignificant acts of beings who awaken our pity rather tha our ire. And no doubt here we have the effect of a them that has been worked upon to the point of satiety, withou any deliberate purpose or thought-out measure. To give un qualified approval to the views of the author, one might say would be to proclaim oneself a misanthrope and a revolu tionary. But they take full effect against a meanness to subtly interwoven with social life for the man of the world t detest it sincerely, as is clearly shown by the hidden uneasine perceptible in many of the judgments passed upon it.

Vanity Fair, *Pendennis*, *The Newcomes*, give full scope to tl personality of the novelist. His greatness becomes apparen although as an artist he is incomplete. The first of the three novels is probably the best, in that it reveals all tl writer's qualities while keeping his faults in the backgroun The other two have their moments of more subdued inspira tion, which may win for them the suffrages of many; Colon Newcome holds a warm place in the affection of English reader justified no doubt by the splendid portrait he offers of gentleman, but also explainable by the not irrelevant sugge tion that he satisfies the desire for a sympathetic hero. Tl fact remains, however, that *Vanity Fair*, despite its occasion failings, and the looser construction of the second part, has strength and a sureness of creative touch which stamp it the decisive work of a writer who, for once, gives full expressi to his genius.

And this genius is more robust and many-sided than could ve been expected from all that an ironical and somewhat kle temperament seemed to hold in promise. The hostile titude which Thackeray adopted towards Romanticism and ntimentality betrays its secret cause: the presence in the

ood akin to the desires and aspirations of the Romanticists, ithout being able or willing to yield to it wholly.

Realism, therefore, with Thackeray is prompted not by a tached *curiosity, but by an emotional interest, which is* uch less cynical than it is impassioned He is undoubtedly seeker after truth; *but truth is cruel, and it is in vain that* e perception of this cruelty tries to hide itself, it continually eaks out. If one examines the fascination which attracts e analyst in Thackeray to probe the sore parts of human ture, one finds that there is in it an intellectual taste for

me anger against art that is superficial, cowardly, and canot or does not wish to see; and finally, that secret, deep elight in what is sad, that preference for all that savours of

hich substitutes our own interest for the noble or honest tentions in which our clear consciousness takes pride, have ever been dissected with such passionate eagerness Only wift had written thus in England; and although Smollett inced the same bitterness, he had much less penetrative ill. At the end of the nineteenth century, moral criticism, ith Butler and Shaw, was to display the same fearless ourage; but their vision, compared with that of Thackeray,

remains distinctly calm; his irony throbs with passion eve in his most collected moments. And when Meredith, in hi turn, will come to search the heart of his 'egoist,' he wil bring to his task a power of soaring poetry, the sovereig freedom of the comic spirit, whose light rapture will serve t mitigate his rancour.

Are there not any of our fellow-beings who can lay clain to our sympathy? Undoubtedly there are, and *Vanity Fai* affords several examples of such. A clear-sighted analysi of souls allows of a certain indulgence, or of a feeling o disillusioned tenderness towards some of them; but it is incompatible with the mental outlook in which the conventiona novel delights. In these pages of Thackeray there are n heroes; at the most a Dobbin, chivalrous but dull, a faithfu dog to those he protects and saves, and who repay his service with ingratitude; an Amelia, loving, passive, always in th background; for true heroism and affection are by no mean clothed in all the beauty which our naïve desire for symbol lends to them; and if we were to be shown these virtues a they really are, few, if any, would recognize them in thei mediocre garb. Life never offers a gem of pure water which nature has cut in advance.

The complexity of things as they are puts other impediments in the way of the simple exigencies of a facile idealism Becky Sharp cannot be ranked as a heroine, for the reaso that she is exactly the opposite. But is it not true that, jus as the author himself, we all in turn feel her ascendancy Might it not be that art and life seem to oppose the absolut application of any moral category? Or does Becky perchanc stand for a courage and elasticity of mind which have a valu in themselves, and which it would be foolish to class accordin to a scale of virtues and vices? It belongs to the essence o this novel to bring these questions forward, even if the autho is unable to answer them. Nor does he attempt to do so for the reason, perhaps, that he is not sufficiently sure of hi own deeper mind; and he is himself, in every respect, a divided soul.

Carried away, as it were, by his creation of Becky, he give her such wonderful reality that she dominates not only th novel, but also the whole of his work. Never has there bee a more thorough study of the instinctive trickery, the inherent duplicity, the supple energy of a certain type of th eternal woman—the actress, the adventuress who scandalize

and conquers the world, invincible in her defeats, insecure in her triumphs. In what regards her, Thackeray's realism, intuitional at bottom, possesses an extraordinary force. But though it is carried to great length, it is limited by a remnant of sentimentalism, or by the respect which the writer still [illegible]

[illegible]

ban under which public opinion had placed certain subjects was as yet almost absolute.

The hesitancy which colours the art of Thackeray is here apparent. Influenced in one direction by certain tendencies, and at the same time attracted by others of an opposite nature, it cannot quite make its choice. In many respects the guiding spirit in this realistic work is the need of tender emotion, as with Dickens. While the action of the story may seem to avoid traditional conclusions, in the end it comes to favour them. At the same time as Thackeray has a liking for cruel truth, he has a yearning love for kindness, and even advocates its merits. At first the plot unfolds itself very logically, emanates, so to speak, from the characters themselves; but, when a hundred and one providential happenings intervene, it very soon loses its firm outline. On the whole it is so long and complicated, so mingled with extraneous elements—in the present case entire episodes borrowed from recent history—the trend of thought is interrupted by so many digressions and moral reflections, that the work, when viewed at one glance, seems very loosely put together. And this applies also to *Pendennis* and *The Newcomes*.

In another direction, again, Thackeray selects his materials [illegible]

to average truth; yet it is far from being objective. If [illegible]

of every scene, the pathos or the humour of every situation; the field of possibility is marked out into arbitrary provinces

in accordance with his personal experience, and his pen-pictures of society are most openly incomplete. There is no desire on his part to make his investigations either methodical or documentary.

While Thackeray in his work shows himself the grim psychologist of the 'vanity' of human sentiment, another leading impulse with him is that of historical imagination; a duality of talent which is in every way characteristic of the man, because he is as much a poet as an analyst. From the point of view of art, *Henry Esmond* is the best of his books; here the atmosphere is that of the classical period, and the joy of living through the mind in an age—that of Queen Anne—the manners and spirit of which he loved, stimulates and guides his inventive powers, suggesting and strengthening a definite unity of tone. In this story, as serene and restrained in its moments of emotion as in those of quiet amusement, there is a grave harmony which can be described as a success in delicate and refined impressionism. The book possesses great merit in the construction of certain characters, as well as in the picture it traces of a past epoch in history; at the same time, it has its weak points, such as the inability of the writer to cut away what is only accessory, and keep severely to the main lines of the plot. But when compared with *The Virginians* which followed it, it seems more closely knit together. And in spite of the more open incursions of the author into the literature or the history of the eighteenth century (*The English Humourists*, *The Four Georges*, etc.), *Esmond* retains all its superiority, because in a novel literary criticism and the reconstruction of facts are not subject to the same technical demands.

We feel, however, with Thackeray that he has not realized his genius to the full. He never took thoroughly in hand either his life or his work; even when he was a respectable and famous writer, he kept a little of the Bohemian in him. He has left no book which can be described as perfect. Artist though he is, with the pen and with the pencil, it is by his art—the organization and elaboration of form—that he stands open to the injuries of time. But his temperament shows qualities of supreme originality; and when he is at his best he cannot be rivalled. The satirist, the humorist, the novelist in Thackeray, all have their individual and uncommon traits; when combined, they go to form a personality as rich as it is charming; but when Thackeray becomes the cruel

... painter of the ... brings a new and unique contribution to the ...rature of England.

... *Trollope, Reade, Wilkie Coll*... George Eliot a serie... ...uance of the spirit c... ...s precision under th...

... direct docu-...; on the other, with Reade and Wilkie Collins, to-...ds an ideal—to all appearances quite the opposite—of ...ational intensity. These two elements, bound together ...ertain psychological and literary affinities, were later to be ...l with each other under the influence of French naturalism, ...ead to the quest for a truth at once objective and startling.

...ere is to be noted in the art of Trollope [1] a rather delicate ...e of difference. The main part of his work is a series of ...s, limited in scope, which ... ...f the ... ...ling a ... of the sur-...ings. ... this is described with precision and piquancy, ...rather uniform colouring by a writer who is at once ... nd who prides himself upon ... One could be tempted into ... a first draft of what will later ...p into monographs on professional or local subjects, ...rom a doctrinal realism. In fact, Trollope had no ...ceived plan of writing; he did not possess any particular ...dge of Church circles; and his portraits, like his ...s of daily life and habits, are really the results of in-... and conjecture, rather than a photographic reproduc-... what he saw.

[1] ...ny Trollope (1815–82), an official in the postal service, wrote novels ...ethodical regularity which he has depicted not without some com-... the great success of *The Warden* (1855) encouraged him to develop ... theme in a series: *Barchester Towers*, 1857, *Doctor Thorne*, 1859, ...*Parsonage*, 1867, *The Small House at Allington*, 1864, *The Last ...of Barset*, 1867; he tried his hand at the political novel (*Phineas* ...), etc.), and the problem novel (*The Vicar of Bullhampton* ...) ... less success: his *Autob*... ...d a study ...

And yet it is not wrong to rank him with the realists. He works up data in which pure observation, the passive registering of facts, does not occupy a foremost place. Nevertheless, we owe to his creative talent scenes and personages of a verisimilitude which is, in the field of art, equal, if not superior, to actual reality. All his methods tend to give an impression of average truth. As the neutralized image of the world, conceived by one who thinks clearly and whose powers of vision are devoid of originality, the miniature society Trollope depicts has few extremes; pathos and humour are not lacking in it, but they are subdued and controlled. As to the accuracy and immediacy of his reproductive talent, he has deceived competent judges; he instinctively aimed at a certain quality in art, and attained to it by his own means. He possessed the essence of realism, which consists in the inner intention of the artist first, and concerns his technique only in the second instance.

The case of Charles Reade [1] is different. Not only was he a realist by temperament, but also by method, and to a degree of conscientiousness and system that had as yet been unequalled in England. He described his habits and rules; and, a few years later, they were to be those of Zola, who formed them independently. According to the documentary formula, a novelist is a compiler who gathers together, against future use, all that experience has revealed on various situations and problems. He borrows from personal observation, but above all, from the organs in which are registered the current happenings of everyday existence: newspapers, magazines, technical reports, accounts of law-court proceedings. In this way, Reade believes, reality can be caught with infallible certainty, since it is 'snapped,' so to speak, in its natural state, and before it has been elaborated and more or less modified by the spirit of generalization or moralizing. This was the plan which he put into practice. All his work is built upon facts. Whether he treats of the Middle Ages or his own epoch, whether he seeks to appeal to our emotions or only to add to our knowledge, he will not state anything unless he is positively sure of what he says. This is a common feature

[1] Charles Reade (1814–84) wrote dramas (*Gold*, 1853; *Drink*, adapted from the *Assommoir* of Zola, 1877), and chiefly novels: *Peg Woffington*, 1853; *Christie Johnstone*, 1853; *It is Never too Late to Mend*, 1856; *Jack of All Trades*, 1858; *The Cloister and the Hearth*, 1861; *Hard Cash*, 1863; *Griffith Gaunt*, 1866; *Put Yourself in his Place*, 1870; *A Terrible Temptation*, 1871, etc. See Charles L. and Compton Reade, *Charles Reade, a Memoir, etc.*, 1887.

of his writing, be it the historical novel, *The Cloister and the*

of unity.

Charles Reade has serious merits. He knows how to tell a story, to create the impression of fatality and of the interdependence of causes. His dramatic episodes—to which the precise delineation of detail, and the strong yet restrained imaginative colouring of the narration, impart some of the vividness of reality—are moving enough. However, his philanthropic arguments leave us indifferent; aiming, as they do, at very particular cases of abuse, they become too documentary and loaded with circumstantial detail to rouse emotion. They convince us, but they lack that stimulating warmth of feeling which Dickens, whose arguments are less solid, knew better how to suggest. In Reade's work, which is of so varied a nature, the most living pages might be found in *The Cloister and the Hearth*, an ambitious study of the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renascence, certainly eloquent, though often over-estimated, and above all in *Griffith Grant* or *A Terrible Temptation*, where the handling of psychological and pathological 'cases' is carried out with a

mediary movement of similar import; this, on the one hand, is connected with the ever-increasing severity of realism, and, on the other, with a reviving need of emotional expression, which prepared the way for what was going to be a new Romantic literature. Collins brought into fashion the sensational tale, in which the mechanical plotting of a crime is ingeniously and elaborately worked out. Dickens in the novels of his later years showed the same tendency; his *Edwin Drood* is a well-known example. Collins in his work combines the feeling of terror and the art of creating an

and the singular success of the contemporary detective novel are thus adumbrated; but no less apparent is an ever bolde search for literary effects in the violent aspects of reality, an in the emotional appeal of life's untold possibilities. A certai kind of the supernatural, which finds its source in the excep tional accidents of human experiences, and sets the whol nervous system on edge, completes and crowns the effort of realism, while leaving it behind and even including it contradiction.[1]

4. *George Eliot.*—George Eliot [2] is a writer whose fame i menaced. She is a victim of the discredit which opinion to-day throws upon her generation, and which will pass witl time. Graver, however, are the reasons for disfavour whicl concern her personally. The upholders of tradition have never forgiven her bold ventures in philosophic thought, no excused that act in her life which, though it agreed with the

[1] Edward Lytton Bulwer, Lord Lytton (1803–73), a versatile writer, les original than brilliant, was the mirror of literary fashions for three-quarter of a century; he had his phase of realism, when his art was uncertain and con fused (*The Caxtons*, 1849; *My Novel*, 1853; *What will he do with it?* 1858) He also wrote novels dealing with social problems, where he is more the cleve than the moving writer: *Paul Clifford*, 1830; *Eugene Aram*, 1832; historica novels: *The Last Days of Pompeii*, 1834; *Rienzi*, 1835; *The Last of the Barons* 1843; *Harold*, 1848; dramas: *Richelieu*, 1838; *The Lady of Lyons*, 1838; novel of terror and of the supernatural: *Zanoni*, 1844; *The Haunted and the Haunters* 1859; *A Strange Story*, 1862. Nothing in his work is more sincere than hi *Pelham*, 1828, a study of a type of dandy which was the rage of the time, o *The Coming Race*, 1871, where the picture is that of a kind of Utopia whicl resembles in several points the *Erewhon* of Butler. If his popularity was i any way the gauge of his value, Lytton would rank as a great writer of hi day. At the same time he merits something better then mere indifference See his biography by his grandson, the second Earl of Lytton, 1913.

[2] Mary Ann Evans, born in 1819 in Warwickshire, a keen student, gave hersel a varied education, frequented the centres of advanced thought, translated the *Leben Jesu* of Strauss (1846), the *Essence of Christianity* of Feuerbach (1854); contributed to the *Westminster Review*, knew Spencer, and Lewes whose life she shared and who encouraged her to write works of imagination. She published, under the name of George Eliot, novels: *Scenes of Clerical Life* (in *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1857; in a volume, 1858), which had a great success; *Adam Bede*, 1859; *The Mill on the Floss*, 1860; *Silas Marner*, 1861; *Romola*, 1863; *Felix Holt the Radical*, 1866; *Middlemarch*, 1871–2; *Daniel Deronda*, 1876; poems: *The Spanish Gipsy*, 1868; *The Legend of Jubal, etc.*, 1874; essays, *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such*, 1879, etc. After the death of Lewes (1878) she married J. W. Cross, and died the same year, 1880. Her corre- spondence was utilized by her husband for her biography (*Life and Letters*, 1885). *Works*, Warwick ed., 1901–3. See study by M. Blind, 1883; Cooke, 1883; C. Thomson, 1901; L. Stephen, (English Men of Letters), 1902; Olcott, 1911; Gardner (*Inner Life of George Eliot*), 1912; Deakin (*Early Life of George Eliot*), 1913; M. L. Cazamian (*Le Roman et les Idées en Angleterre*), 1923; S. Pfeiffer, *George Eliots Beziehungen zu Deutschland*, 1925; E. S. Haldane, *George Eliot and her Times*, 1927; A. Paterson, *George Eliot's Family Life and Letters*, 1928.

ethics of the heart, jarred with the principles admitted by custom. Critical spirits, or lovers of pure art, are not without resenting either the moderation of her thought, or the

opinions. Even among her admirers, there are few who do not find in her work a faint suspicion of heaviness. In the study c

from a

and at

zeal which might be aroused by the feeling that one was pleading a cause.

It is perhaps best to divide her work into two parts. There is no question of leaving the first entirely aside, although very

and transformed the daughter of Puritan parents into a pupil of Spencer and Comte. Her independence, won after a long and strenuous struggle, was to leave its mark upon her for

ciples. All the intellectuality and fondness for reasoning which seemed to be part and parcel of her very being, deprived or tended to deprive her of a certain happy spontaneity, afforded her less scope for the play of instinct, and made purely artistic creation less natural to her, while rendering more natural the painstaking efforts of artificial labour. Since her vocation was to write, and to be a novelist, she did much

nobility of her inner development with its honesty of purpose,

y lent a deeper spiritual

to all that she wrote a

compensates for many

failings of her aesthetic judgment.

Thus it can be said that her realism was conscious and systematic; all the gifts of her intellectual culture contributed to it, while in it the influence of science, which she had thoroughly imbibed, is everywhere manifest. She had made a study of history as of exegesis; she was acquainted with the psychology of the Utilitarians, and had accepted the doctrine of evolution as soon as it was first explained. As an inevitable result of the mental discipline of her youth, she felt the need of precision and objectivity, and dwelt upon the idea that any object of study, no matter what it be, has its own infinite value. The construction of her novels, the substance of her analyses, and much of her imagery, recall this scientific schooling of her thought. But realism to her is much more than a mere method, or even an intellectual necessity; it is an emotion and a creed, and this she has explained with perfect clearness. All the modest virtues and vices of humble folks, however mediocre or ill-favoured they may be, become attractively interesting to her, and the source of this interest is love. Her words ring with the supreme appeal of a common brotherhood and common sufferings; and whatever stress she may lay on the solidarity between men which nature enforces and which intelligence comes to recognize, her ethical beliefs spring from that spontaneous gift of the heart: sympathy.

It is no easy task, therefore, to divide what is fresh and natural in her work from what remains dry and lifeless, or rather to distinguish between the causes which give rise to these conflicting elements. Besides, they are often combined. The most barren wastes in her prose are not without some oases, just as the vistas of refreshing green are broken by flat stretches of stony dreariness. But, upon the whole, a great number of her arguments, of her intentions, and most of the expressions which these naturally called forth, are more directly related, no doubt, to dialectics than to poetry, in the sense in which every artist is a poet. The bare framework of her ideas is often too much in evidence; not infrequently, the situations and characters allow the reader a glimpse of the inner architecture which backs and supports them; and her style, through many a page, through whole chapters and episodes, has the indefinable quality that suggests a lesson in psychology, ethics, or history.

The value of the philosophy imparted in the deliberate teaching of George Eliot's novels, and the literary intentions which she enunciates most openly, have and will retain their

particular merit, even if we prefer to find in other parts of her work its most precious assets and its most vital interest. In *Adam Bede* she expounds the doctrine granting each of us the initiative which works out our moral and religious destiny; *The Mill on the Floss* is devoted to a study of the collaboration of character with circumstances in the fulfilment of fate; *Silas Marner* treats of all the hidden forces which shape man's personality through the contact of his fellows; the subject of *Felix Holt* is the prominent part played by the education of the individual in any matter dealing with social reform, etc. Such are the main themes of the novels; but there are others which form, so to speak, the background, and which are really of deeper significance as well as more substantial: the interdependence of all human beings; the intimate workings of consequence which propagate the influence of a given act, for good or for evil, beyond our visible horizon, in ever-widening circles; and more especially, the pathetic quality of the most common human emotions.

All this, undoubtedly, has its value. But this doctrine is not transmuted completely enough into the silent preconceptions of creative imagination itself; it is not sufficiently dissolved into the plastic elements of her art; it remains a doctrine, asserting and expressing itself as such. And it is just in these avowed assertions that the weakness of George Eliot's work is to be found. Similarly, the doctrinal elements of her will have added no supreme achievement to her fictions. The scholarly historical setting of *Romola* may be estimable, but it leaves us cold. *Daniel Deronda* is a strong but unsuccessful attempt, because it is almost entirely artificial. Even in the most vigorous and spontaneous among her novels, there are passages and features which explain these partial failures.

The other part of her work bears the stamp of true inspiration. It is not less rich in persuasive ideas, but it breathes the communicative ardour of universal sympathy, the keen and kindly perception of the inner life of souls, and a powerful sense of that hard-won heroic virtue, to the height of which we all have, some time or other, to rise. All the doctrine of George Eliot is here, implied in the very facts of her stories. But at the same time it allows of ironical realism, and even expresses itself through it. The touching *Scenes of Clerical Life*, almost the whole of *Adam Bede*, much of *Silas Marner*, the main part of *The Mill on the Floss* and *Middlemarch*,

belong to this order of spontaneous and concrete invention. It is more than enough to guarantee the fame of a great writer.

For in works such as these there is a livening and animating force at the base of the writer's art. From her experience of life, from her knowledge of self, or from an intuitive revelation, she draws the material for an imaginary world, which has in it the essence of reality. And this world is ample enough to allow for all possible contrasts, and call forth smiling amusement as well as loving compassion; it can even arouse a feeling of angry irony. The humour of George Eliot is not the least of her qualities; it is a salutary and pleasing element, which introduces an invigorating freshness into her prose. More often of a tender, playful, even delicate nature, it grows satirical at times, and acquires then a sharp edge which contradicts, as in the portrait of the Dodsons (*The Mill on the Floss*), the general lesson of sympathy; but none among her readers will object to this. The study ot Mrs. Poyser in *Adam Bede* is an unalloyed source of joy; in *Silas Marner* there are lively scenes of rural realism.

The world in which the imagination of George Eliot finds itself at greatest ease is that of the provinces, the home of her early years; and, no doubt, her creative faculty is not to the same degree dramatic; she is essentially a revealer of self. But the beings she creates represent, as it were, imaginary aspects or developments of her ego, and acquire the quality of truth by reason of this vital bond. Some are women, such as Dinah Morris (*Adam Bede*) and Dorothea (*Middlemarch*); some are men, as Amos Barton, Silas Marner, and Philip Wakem (*The Mill on the Floss*); but it is plain that they take after the authoress herself, and that her personality passes into them all.

Once, however, she has taken herself as the direct object of study, and created her masterpiece in Maggie Tulliver (*The Mill on the Floss*). The first two hundred pages of this novel are, probably, the most nearly perfect she has written; for the faithful evocation of scenic detail as well as of manners, and the astonishing accuracy of the psychology, are the outcome of an immediate and infallible impulse, translating into words the ever-present vision of the past.

From *Scenes of Clerical Life* to *Middlemarch*, George Eliot is an incomparable painter of the lower circles of English provincial life, and of a whole order of souls who, simple as

social values go, are nevertheless spiritually complex, torn by scruples, and by the anguish of moral conflicts. In this sphere, her art derives its value from its truth as much as from the emotional interest it creates, and indissolubly from both.

No doubt she was aware of this, or, at the end, she recognized it. Her intellectual zeal, already cautious and open to all human feelings during the years of her ardent youth, grew [illegible] in the course [illegible] without re- [illegible] *Mill on the Floss* left ample scope to what is inexplicable, to the hazards which cannot be avoided by every upright and sincere thinker. In *Middlemarch*, the psychology tends more clearly towards an intuitive idea of mind and consciousness. Her most powerful novel, even if it is not the most inspired or the most harmoniously constructed, is the last in which the activity of her courageous, ever-moving mind has been expressed in terms of scenes and figures familiar to herself, and thus endowed with artistic reality.[1]

[illegible]

[1] A very characteristic and national vein runs through the work of R. S Surtees (1802–64), who through his spirited pictures of the country gentry and [illegible] humour, and fancy, bears some sort of [illegible]

BOOK VII—NEW DIVERGENCIES (1875–1940)

CHAPTER I

THE CHANGE IN LITERARY THOUGHT: CAUSES AND CHARACTERISTICS

THE years 1875–80 correspond to a turning-point in the history of English literature, as well as in the very life of England. About this time should be placed the beginning of a new period—the last whose development is fully known to us. It can be considered as ending with the outbreak of the Great War—a deep-felt influence, cutting through all the strands of reality, and with an effect which, at the present day, is still incalculable.

The causes and the features of that change can be summed up, due stress being laid on social circumstances, but making due allowance for the inner rhythm of the mind, whose pulsation remains perceptible, even if it becomes weaker with the reciprocal penetration of its phases.

The third quarter of the nineteenth century—the period from 1850 to 1875—had been for Great Britain an era of unequalled prosperity. A wave of optimism, and of trust in the future of the country, had risen in consequence. A national culture so obviously in a state of equilibrium both within itself, and with the conditions of its foreign surroundings, might well entertain the feeling of its own value. This age, the main body and stronghold of the Victorian era, is a static epoch. After 1875, under repeated and various shocks, that equilibrium is destroyed or weakened; its place is taken by a feeling of instability. Set loose again, the tendencies which had been for a time gathered into a powerful synthesis make their diverging trend once more felt. With the last quarter of the century, the Victorian spirit obscurely loses its self-confidence; and meanwhile, the need of a spiritual renovation appears and forces itself upon the national consciousness. Whatever may be the chronological sequence of these two facts—and their roots are too much entangled for such an order to be perceptible—they show themselves as simultaneous, and intimately connected. A third fact is soon

added to them: thus growing again more flexible, and therefore more susceptible of impressions, the English literary temperament becomes more open to foreign intellectual movements; it welcomes more readily some influences from abroad.

The breakdown of confidence is the outcome of a crisis in prosperity. British industries are hurt or threatened by the competition of younger nations. The export trade ceases to grow. As a whole, the economic activity of the country shows

The craving for a renovation, on the other hand, seems to

the previous period were, at least relatively, restrained and repressed. In spite of the exuberant revolts of idealism, the Victorian age, at the stage of its full growth, had found its central aim in the search for balance through reason; it had been before everything intellectual and positively minded. The age which succeeds it is thus bound to witness a Romantic revival, although the special aspect, the individual shades, and the original quality of this Romanticism cannot be known in advance.

The spiritual structure of the new period reveals itself first through the self-assertion of sensibility on several lines. Feeling, no longer content to be bound by the various sets of rules which had severely restrained it, rebels against them, and tends to set itself up as the sufficient or the sovereign principle of thought and life. The philosophy and the

literature of the declining century are filled with an impassioned revolt against science. The rational study of things, as a method, has not justified the hopes which it had raised, or which had gathered round it, without its taking actual responsibility for them; it has not given man the material and moral happiness which had been naïvely expected of it. On the contrary, it has destroyed or dried up some of the fountain-heads of joy; it has struck out sources of bitterness yet unknown. Rationalism meanwhile, hated and denounced as it is by impatient angry spirits, faces the rebellion of instinct with a still unperturbed equanimity; it feels itself proof against the direct onslaughts of its adversaries. But now the citadel is turned. The creative activities of the mind are no longer willing to follow that narrow sunken road which imperious logic, from a position of vantage, overlooks and commands. Another way is discovered; more direct and easy at first, it then crosses unexplored regions, where errors and doubts are lurking, and cause sudden alarms; but it opens up virgin territories, in which abundant wealth lies hidden. In an endeavour to conquer spiritual freedom, the rights of intuition are proclaimed; mysticism revives in all its forms; and philosophy, ethics, art, at one through the working of a of a secret psychological affinity, readily contribute to the making of a new Romanticism.

Imagination was being emancipated at the same time. Victorian rationalism no doubt had not spurned its aid, but had treated it as a mere assistant. Now it assumes authority in its turn. With rapturous joy, the spirit of adventure reawakens; the unknown, the beyond, are again invested with the attraction which they had possessed to such a degree three-quarters of a century earlier, and of which they had been robbed for a time by the ambition, the assurance of knowing and understanding all. The feeling of the mysterious side of things is no longer repressed; it is accepted, and even sought for its own sake. Day-dreams are now a permissible means of refreshment for the soul, a means of knowledge even; conduct itself can be founded upon them. The novel and lyric poetry are transformed by the virtue of that freedom; they draw from it a variety, a fancy, a wealth at once more substantial and more delicate. While realism, in several directions, continues, and even grows more intense, a revolt breaks out against the compulsion enforced by realism, and by the positivist spirit whence it sprang.

In so far as this predominance of sensibility and imagination is concerned, the reaction which now begins recalls the Romanticism of the eighteen-twenties. But the new circumstances among which it takes place, and the different influences of its surroundings, introduce quite other elements into its composition. The Victorian age had bowed to a strict discipline in social life and in morals; this is now relaxed, and as a consequence the repressed instincts are set loose again; unless one should rather say that the instincts, stimulated by a revival of the elementary powers of human nature, bend down and break the rule of repression. The *senses in their turn claim their freedom; they* force a bolder range of subjects, of tone and expression, upon a nation addicted in principle to austerity in language and manners. Everywhere the new aim is intensity. On the plane of sensation, of individuality and desire, intensity is stressed at the expense [illegible] ole class of realities from art [illegible] On the plane of intelliger [illegible] e need of intensity urges the critical faculties of the mind to a degree of rigour yet unknc [illegible] appears as a coun [illegible] complementary [illegible] in many respects, [illegible] t of the previous [illegible] :hy, and adventurc [illegible] imposing and decorous wisdom of the Victorian compromise in all things; and it is often through this mood of revolt, rather than through *the nature of the tendencies in themselves, that* the present is different from the past. The influences from abroad, in so far as they are felt, act as so many stimuli, accentuating movements to which the instinct and genius of the race had spontaneously given birth.

Thus made of such various elements, this age offers an extremely complex structure. It shows us the most contradictory tendencies side by side The new Romanticism, which gives it its general stamp, is steeped to the core in the keenest intellectuality. In one and the same group of writers, and occasionally in one and the same author—such as Samuel *Butler—rational criticism in its typical form,* free from any moderating influence, is associated with an attitude of rebellion against the excesses of scientific dogmatism. A psychological connection unites the renascence of religious

dealism, full as it is of moral zeal, with promptings of free nquisitiveness, and with a bold curiosity of thought, the outcome of which is to liberate art from ethics, and ethics from all consistent rule. Forcible and earnest doctrines, which subordinate the individual to society or to the Empire, find themselves in contact with an aestheticism that recognizes no law but itself.

The diverging currents of the period can thus be more precisely mapped out. First is heard the protest of intuitive and nystic needs against the authority of reason, and against nechanical views, which seemed the inevitable upshot of rational thinking. Philosophy proper, then the reflection of cultivated minds on the general conclusions of science, and the literature of fancy, testify to this revival. This revolt is mainly brought about by the renascence of feeling, but ntelligence has its share in it; and so varied and rich is this novement, that such writers as Meredith and Samuel Butler neet there. Along with the illusion of a safe, simple happiness attached to the all-sufficient virtue of truth, this period sees the secure optimism of the preceding age disappear; science now is the source from which a tragic or austere despair takes its rise; over the dark background of the universe, as read and explained by science, Thomson, Hardy, and Gissing raise the fabric of their pessimistic visions, either cloud-built, or in close contact with the hard surface of a joyless earth.

The new Romanticism is thus liberated from the intellectual restraint which checked its growth, and now can freely and fully develop. Its inner impulse carries it either to the most dissimilar beliefs, or to a kind of hedonistic unbelief, which finds a bitter-sweet pleasure in absolute negation. In this broad field one sees at a glance a vast number of tendencies, personalities, and works. Here is on one hand the lyrical poetry of Swinburne, with its sensuous ardour and its enthusiastic cult of words; and on the other hand that of Francis Thompson, with its wondering mystical faith. Next we find Stevenson, and the novel of imagination and adventure. Next again, the aestheticism of Pater and Wilde, with the many and various refinements, either subtle or morbid, which flourish at the decadent close of the century. The worship of art for art's sake, with George Moore, receives a darker shade from the harsh, raw naturalism which the practice of France stimulates and guides: such essential unity there is in the spirit of moral freedom, the common source of both move-

ments. And the Celtic revival diversifies this same back-

of perversity and pessimism which has seemed more and more to settle upon it, the doctrines of action call back the age to a healthier meditation of broad common principles of conduct. These doctrines have their roots in the forcible faiths of the Victorian prophets; but they belong in fact to their own time, and bear its stamp. The imperialism of Kipling takes its stand on an intuitive and violent contempt of intelligence; the constructive Socialism of Wells is stirred by a powerful

or organizing principle was discovered. On the whole, the reign of the new Romanticism was not over; in other words, the larger number of artists still followed an instinctive preference, whether obscure or lucid, for imaginative emotion as opposed to intelligence. But the novel, the drama, and poetry, with Galsworthy, Bennett, Shaw, Yeats, Masefield, *and so many others, while they allowed the persistent effect* of this preference to come out, still would tone it down, and qualify it through many contradictory elements. It was becoming increasingly clear that the individual author was bound by no rule but that of his own temperament; that any desire to write or create under the guiding authority of artistic forms common to all, accepted in advance, justified and prepared by precedents, was finally disappearing. The

possible, here, to speak of a literary period in the proper meaning of the word, the unity of time is, most often, a mere *outside frame.*

Has the unexampled harrowing of souls during the late war

laid in them the seeds of a more harmonious harvest, reduced to a more uniform quality by the very vigour of the sap, the fertility of the soil? None can say yet. Looking only at this latest phase, we might think that the literature of England, like that of France, had reached the point of saturation at which the accumulated influences of the successive ages impart a richly flavoured complexity to the products of a national art, but deny it the power of being efficiently renewed through a simple change. Combined in the depths of the national mind, the tendencies which have successively triumphed in the course of a long and varied past now penetrate and alter one another; they are all, and in every case, more or less present and active. It is not impossible that an art founded on the search for balance, and so, predominantly rational, should try soon in England—as it has been doing in France—to replace the new Romanticism of yesterday; but in this event, it is extremely probable that this art, at the very core of its endeavour to realize order and intelligence, would experience the incurable fever, the sensitiveness, the emotions, the ardours, with which the nineteenth century was saturated to its inmost consciousness, and which it has laid deep in the substance of our being.

To be consulted: A. W. Benn, *Modern England*, 1908; L. Cazamian, *Modern England*, 1911; A. Chevrillon, *Nouvelles Études anglaises*, 1910; J. W. Cunliffe, *English Literature during the Last Half-Century*, 1920 R. W. Gretton, *A Modern History of the English People, 1880–1910*, 1912; Ed. Guyot, *Le Socialisme et l'évolution de l'Angleterre contemporaine*, 1913; W. H. Hudson, *A Short History of English Literature in the Nineteenth Century*, 1918; Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen-Nineties*, 1913; R. Le Gallienne, *The Romantic Nineties*, 1926; P. Mantoux, *A travers l'Angleterre contemporaine*, 1909; W. de la Mare (editor), *The Eighteen-Eighties*, 1931; L. Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, 1919; Hugh Walker, *The Literature of the Victorian Era*, 1910; Harold Williams, *Modern English Writers, 1890–1914*, 1920.

CHAPTER II

THE REVOLT AGAINST MECHANISM

1. F
of the
a pow
limits of certainty are shifted; the notion of truth is transformed, and the hope of human knowledge emboldened. A revolt of the mystical, emotional, religious, and last, but not least, practical needs of the soul, overthrows or shakes the authority of universal mechanism, which rationalist thinkers have felt justified in establishing upon the general results of the sciences. The feeling of moral freedom victoriously asserts itself, along with that of the autonomy of consciousness, of its independence in relation to the laws of matter, and of the privileges through which it transcends the world of quantity; and thus, in various ways, a declining intellectual ambition is revivified. New attention is paid to metaphysics,

methods or principles, still affect the emotions or the will in an analogous manner Whether they grow out of Kant's or of Hegel's influence, or from an original fund of idealism; or gather about the specific tenets of pragmatism, and subordinate truth to man; or set up intuition as the main source of knowledge, they thoroughly harmonize in their trends, their motives, and their aims with the contemporary revival of literature and art. Springing from the same psychological demands, they constitute in the field of thought the natural counterpart of a renascent Romanticism

This movement spreads over the whole of Europe It even

many personalities, it has not, however, produced there any work as outstanding by the creative vigour of the thought, and the winning charm of the manner, as that of Bergson in France. Its claims are embodied in remarkable minds, with

tures all their own; but their ascendancy, subdued and
iefly ethical, or in other cases technical and perceived only
the initiated, has hardly reached the general public except
rough the indirect effect of their teaching. On the whole,
e philosophers have not lost touch with the surrounding
e; the less so, as they are better aware of the claims of life
elf. But none of them stands to the period in the same
ationship as a Locke or a Hume did to previous ages,
controvertibly at the intellectual centre.

The power of attraction which T. H. Green[1] possessed is
historical fact; it has left lasting tokens of itself. It has
nished, however, with the character and actual presence of
e man; and we need other testimonies than his writings to
alize it. His critical thought assails modern rationalism in
firmest stronghold, the work of Hume; and just as the
ch-sceptic had found decisive grounds for doubt in all things,
een picks out defective links in the chain of arguments
means of which he demonstrated his thesis. His positive
ctrine aims at proving that knowledge, moral activity, and
ture, all imply an essential spirituality, but for which human
perience could not have been organized.

At the same time the need to believe, and to escape the
nostic empiricism of Mill and Spencer, leads some thinkers
seek the salvation of philosophy in the vast system which
egel built. Stirling[2] has explored that fabric full of dark-
ss and mystery; from it he has brought back the enthusiasm
a discovery, and in the tone of a prophet, like that of
rlyle, he announces his revelation. By Hegel again William
allace,[3] and Caird,[4] are inspired; the latter is bold enough
follow the stream of philosophical criticism back to its very
urce, the work of Kant, in order to find there, not indeed
e negation, but the confirmation of idealism. And with
adley,[5] whose thought is too individual to be traced to any
ster, the influence of the Hegelian philosophy is still
cognizable. His doctrine is all instinct with a vigorous

[1] Thomas Hill Green (1836–82); professor of moral philosophy at Oxford; Introductions to edition of Hume's *Treatise*, 1874–75; *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 3; *Works*, 1885, etc. See the study by Fairbrother, 1896; Nettleship (new), 1906.

[2] James Hutchison Stirling (1820–1909): *The Secret of Hegel*, 1865. See dy by A. H. Stirling, 1912.

[3] *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*, 1894.

[4] Edward Caird (1835–1908): *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, 89. See study by H. Jones and J. H. Muirhead, 1921.

[5] Francis Herbert Bradley (1846–1924): *Appearance and Reality*, 1893.

effort towards the affirmations of a transcendental faith; but the paths which it follows are singularly like those of scepticism. The idea of relation is predominant in the life of the mind; and this idea, involving a contradiction, disappears when analysed; there remains nothing but the one and indivisible reality which is revealed to us by concrete experience, and over which the necessities of action weave the artificial network of our concepts.

Thus while Bradley is a metaphysician, and an almost

matism is lived by many; its speculative formula is accepted only by a few. The humanism of Schiller,[1] in deep accord with it, emphasizes in the direction of pluralism its protest against the passion of unity, that old dream of dogmatic reason

Wiser

to-day is modest, but not inglorious; it can still show not a few brilliant thinkers, and uncompromising minds, such as Bertrand Russell's.[2] The apparent interruption of its reign

once again justify itself.

yet leaves it its silent sway over the never-ending p
through which the many and average intelligences are g
ally familiarized and reconciled with the relative order
universe. Rationalism remains the very soul of science
science, while it has been repelled from spiritual fields
it had prematurely invaded, and been thus driven back
its own undisputed domain, yet extends its dominion
farther every day. The contemporary period, charact
as it is by an anti-intellectualist revolt, is steeped to th
in the spirit of the inevitable intellectualism.[1]

2. *Samuel Butler*.—It is in the light of this essentially
condition of mind that the personality of a great prec
Samuel Butler,[2] assumed its most precise significance.

[1] Outside of pure philosophy, in the more concrete realm of ethics,
and criticism, the persistence of rationalism through the whole of this
may be easily detected. It is in evidence, chiefly, in the personalities an
of Frederic Harrison, Leslie Stephen, John Morley. All three, in o
understand and regulate life, society, and art, make an intellectual effo
which they combine, more or less, the suppleness of intuitive percepti
of which they teach, by principle, the superior fecundity to their comp
Born all three at the beginning of the Victorian era, they survived it a
tinued until the twentieth century one of its major axes, the need of
intellectuality. Frederic Harrison was the leader of the English Po
group: *Order and Progress*, 1875; *Ruskin* (English Men of Letters),
The Creed of a Layman, 1907, etc. Sir Leslie Stephen (1832–1904), e
the *Dictionary of National Biography*, published: *Free Thinking and
Speaking*, 1873; *Hours in a Library*, 1874–9; *History of English Tho
the Eighteenth Century*, 1876–81; *The Science of Ethics*, 1882; *An Ag
Apology*, 1893; *The English Utilitarians*, 1900, etc; see *Life and Lett*
F. W. Maitland, 1906. John (later Lord) Morley (1838–1923): *V*
1871; *Burke*, 1873; *Rousseau*, 1873; *On Compromise*, 1874; *Diderot, etc.*
Cromwell, 1900; *Life of Gladstone*, 1903, etc.; see study by J. H.
1924; by P. Braybrooke, 1924.

[2] Samuel Butler, born in the rectory of Langar in 1835, the son and gr
of clerics, studied at Shrewsbury and Cambridge, aimed at a Church car
renounced it for conscientious reasons, and for several years became a
farmer in New Zealand; read Darwin and contributed several humorous
on his theory; his letters to his parents supplied the material for a vol
impressions, *A First Year in Canterbury Settlement*, 1863. Returning to E
in 1864, he studied painting, published anonymously *The Evidence
Resurrection of Jesus Christ . . . critically examined*, 1865; *Erewhon,
the Range*, 1872, which created a sensation; *The Fair Haven*, 1873; the
his own name, *Life and Habit*, 1877; *Evolution Old and New*, 1879;
Known and God the Unknown, 1879; *Unconscious Memory*, 1880;
Cunning, 1887. From his frequent travels in Italy he drew the ma
Alps and Sanctuaries of Piedmont, 1881; *Ex Voto*, 1888. *The Life and
of Dr. Samuel Butler*, 1896, is a biography of his grandfather, the
pedagogue. The Homeric problem attracted him and he solved it a
fashion in *The Authoress of the Odyssey*, 1897; he translated the *Iliad*
and the *Odyssey*, 1900. In *Shakespeare's Sonnets Reconsidered, etc.*
he touched upon the Shakespearian problem. He returned to r
criticism in *Erewhon Revisited*, 1901, and died in 1902. His novel, *The
All Flesh*, was published in 1903, and his *Essays on Life, Art and Sc*

His youth coincided with the main body and cent of the Victorian era; he experienced its triumpha confidence, its imperious order. He reacted agains his originality found itself in rebellion. Thus stimula desire for moral independence was carried to extren established his life upon one exclusive principle, dou the solitary search for truth. So his temper is aggres irony harsh ... type of the ... roundings, ...

... fuller development to his ideas ...

respectful of the claims of facts, looks deeper into th of life, and tends to solve it, no longer in the way mechanists, but in that of the idealists.

His work is of an unusual complexity, just as the marked character of the writer is original through the of his features. To the very end of his career, in spit ... twenty years, he remains a solitary figure, unkn ... only ... is eve expressed. In some respects, he is an inventor with cr

... his case by H. Festing Jones. The Lette

an obstinate rider of hobbies; in others, his line of a
is the very path followed by the progress of conten
thought; he adumbrates neo-Lamarckian doctrines,
matism, Bergsonism; and through his humour, throu
full-flavoured sense of the concrete, his liking for c
mise, he belongs indeed to the normal, average, and trac
manner of his race.

From his early manhood he seeks for a rational religi
the problem engrosses his thought to the end of his life
experience loosens the ties that attach him to Anglican
doxy; he then subjects his former belief to an acute a
and makes up an exegesis for himself. At the fountai
of Christianity is the resurrection of Christ. Scrutiniz
evidence, Butler sees the miracle vanish; unhesitatin
substitutes a hypothesis for the faith of the centuries
did not die on the cross; it was a living person that reap
to the sight of the apostles. *Erewhon*, *The Fair Have*
whon Revisited, *The Way of All Flesh*, assail with in
allusions, with deadly ironies, the Church, its doctr
ministers, the feelings and the practice of the faithfu
are let into the souls of ecclesiastics: they are human
crushed by a mission which ought to rouse enthusias
only produces torpor. To all practical purposes, churc
banks in which the pious, speculating on eternal rewa
exchange for cash receive drafts on the hereafter. So
does the popular mind take to the marvellous, that th
negligible nucleus of fact, the fraud of supernatural a
ances, will bring about the instantaneous crystallizatio
system of myths, and a cult. Founded on error, a re
organization maintains itself by means of cynicism, cre
cowardice, interested motives.

This criticism in the manner of Voltaire is wrapped
transparent veils, through which it bristles aggressiv
every side. But along with it, and in close connectio
it, there appears a respectful, liberal attitude, a symp
intelligence, that grows, gathers strength, and finall
quers. The heart has little share in it; Butler is nev
from a touch of dryness. Still, he has a faith of his c
which almost mystical elements are superadded to th
ings of reason. A sane man should accept the surv
consolatory illusions; he should spiritualize the old c
from within. In the memory of ourselves that we le
the lasting fecundity of our actions, we find an immo

on this earth. The divine is immanent in the universe; and beyond the known God whom our reflection can encompass, God the Unknown dwells in the infinitude of space. Thus a link is preserved between Butler and the community of believers. He chooses a place for himself with them, among [illegible] And [illegible] —as in [illegible] whose pressure overcomes the aversion of the living against life—a moderate optimism now quietly predominates: it is good to live; man can be, if he likes, at peace with the world.

The reason is that the outlook of the philosopher has been singularly broadened Butler is one of the first disciples of [illegible]

now, the purely mechanical process of natural selection does not seem to him any longer able to explain the obscure triumphs of being, in the course of development. Buffon, Lamarck, Erasmus Darwin, had at the first attempt formed juster views than the author of *The Origin of Species*: the history of the animal kingdom shows us the working of an adaptation—that elastic faculty, at the heart of which an intuitive perception is lurking and active. The main spring of this evolution is not chance, but a concrete divination, 'cunning.' Having thus rediscovered the path to vitalism, Butler follows it as far as the notion of a kind of *élan vital* [illegible]

ı obstinate rider of hobbies; in others, his line of advance the very path followed by the progress of contemporary ıought; he adumbrates neo-Lamarckian doctrines, pragatism, Bergsonism; and through his humour, through his ll-flavoured sense of the concrete, his liking for comproise, he belongs indeed to the normal, average, and traditional anner of his race.

From his early manhood he seeks for a rational religion, and ıe problem engrosses his thought to the end of his life. His ıperience loosens the ties that attach him to Anglican orthooxy; he then subjects his former belief to an acute analysis, ıd makes up an exegesis for himself. At the fountain-head Christianity is the resurrection of Christ. Scrutinizing the ridence, Butler sees the miracle vanish; unhesitatingly, he ıbstitutes a hypothesis for the faith of the centuries: Jesus d not die on the cross; it was a living person that reappeared the sight of the apostles. *Erewhon*, *The Fair Haven*, *Erehon Revisited*, *The Way of All Flesh*, assail with incessant lusions, with deadly ironies, the Church, its doctrine, its inisters, the feelings and the practice of the faithful. We e let into the souls of ecclesiastics: they are human, weak, ushed by a mission which ought to rouse enthusiasm, and ıly produces torpor. To all practical purposes, churches are ınks in which the pious, speculating on eternal rewards, in ıchange for cash receive drafts on the hereafter. So readily ɔes the popular mind take to the marvellous, that the most egligible nucleus of fact, the fraud of supernatural appearıces, will bring about the instantaneous crystallization of a ystem of myths, and a cult. Founded on error, a religious ganization maintains itself by means of cynicism, credulity, ɔwardice, interested motives.

This criticism in the manner of Voltaire is wrapped up in ansparent veils, through which it bristles aggressively on very side. But along with it, and in close connection with , there appears a respectful, liberal attitude, a sympathetic ıtelligence, that grows, gathers strength, and finally conuers. The heart has little share in it; Butler is never free om a touch of dryness. Still, he has a faith of his own, in 'hich almost mystical elements are superadded to the findıgs of reason. A sane man should accept the survival of ɔnsolatory illusions; he should spiritualize the old dogmas om within. In the memory of ourselves that we leave, in ıe lasting fecundity of our actions, we find an immortality

earth. The divine is immanent in the universe and
the known God whom our reflection can encompass.
e Unknown dwells in the infinitude of space. Thus a
preserved between Butler and the community of
s. He chooses a place for himself with them, among
e enlightened members of the 'Broad Church.' And
rewhon was rife with pessimistic suggestions—as in
me, so much like Schopenhauer, of the unborn whose
overcomes the aversion of the living against life—a
e optimism now quietly predominates: it is good to
n can be, if he likes, at peace with the world.
eason is that the outlook of the philosopher has been
ly broadened. Butler is one of the first disciples of
; but his allegiance to the transformist theory does not
him from making free with it; he applies it humorously
ines, and calls up the strange prospect of a world in
ey will have reduced their masters to slavery. And
purely mechanical process of natural selection does
n to him any longer able to explain the changes
s of being, in the course of development. Buffon,
, Erasmus Darwin, had at the first attempt formed
iews than the author of *The Origin of Species*; the
of the animal kingdom shows us the working of an
on—that elastic faculty, at the heart of which an
perception is lurking and active. The main spring
evolution is not chance, but a conscious direction,
.' Having thus rediscovered the path to vitalism,
llows it as far as the notion of a kind of *diffuse* mind
in the subconscious; and his psychology turns into
sies: the world is composed of matter and memory,
ce of mind is to remember. Not only does physical
ism fail to govern the inner life, but the latter is pure

The struggle for existence was his starting-point
ops within one easy stage of creative evolution, and of
omy of the will in reflective states of consciousness.
s not dwell at such length on the social problem. Its
caution and conformity win him over more quickly
say, no doubt, that property is theft; but this is an
eoretical view, and hardly matters. In fact, a sane
not interfere with the existing frame of society, the
and stay of order. *Erewhon* satirises the Victorian
se, with its timid, routine-loving narrowness; what are
in its true light, hardly disguised by exaggeration.

…r the picture of a rational civilization is set up over against it. In this country of Nowhere, the universities, 'colleges of Unreason,' teach the "hypothetical language," the inestimable advantage of which is, indeed, that it is good for nothing. Just as our courts will punish a culprit, that diseased person, without inquiring into the degree of his responsibility in his crime, those of the Erewhonians will punish a patient, that guilty person, without inquiring into the degree of his responsibility for his illness. The latter absurdity is no other than our own; and to such as have eyes to see, it is pregnant with a profitable lesson. From this country of Erewhon, which is no Utopia, but a satire, we shall come back with more clear-sighted minds, but not in the mood of revolutionaries. The deeper reason is to be found in the doings of instinct; from tradition, the work of an instinctive experience, every attempt at an improvement must of necessity take its start.

In the same way, morals are put in some jeopardy, but eventually made safe again. The right of society to inflict punishment is questioned; but while on one side it is curtailed, on the other it is extended. No doubt, the vulgar notion of crimes and vices does not bear scrutiny. There can be no immorality in any self-seeking motion of the soul; every restraint likewise, every repression is fruitless. *The Way of All Flesh* is the simple, pitiless relation, at times worthy of Flaubert, of an 'ecclesiastical education,' and its consequences. Still, Butler does not destroy anything that is rooted in some vital necessity. He is here a harsh critic of the family, as society has made it; elsewhere (in *Erewhon Revisited*) he … it as a fact of nature. Morals may be a convention, … an indispensable one; what matters is to per… as much as possible, with those veritable and … of the hearts of all children of grace: sincerity,

… remotely connected with life, the …ious temperament have been in… portrait would lack one of its …e no mention made of his …ung theories: the musical …e authorship of the *Odyssey*, …sonality of perception and … ation and zest to all that which he likes or admires: …oks, or landscapes.

For he is a writer in his own way. He could have been in the way of many others: early in life, he had written narratives in a sober
and dramatic e
motives, and t
retrenched all such intentions from his style, stripped it of everything that was not necessary to the clearest and most direct expression of ideas or facts. The process was a loss to the artist in him: the first chapters of *Erewhon*, an example of his early manner, are the work of a master in the craft of story-telling. But on the other hand, that loss was a gain to the diffusion of his thought: he reaped from his sacrifice a perfect and irresistible honesty of statement. His humour is one of the most implicit in literature, and one of the most scientific in method: its surface is not stirred by the slightest tremor; nothing reveals the hidden energy of the intention, the active simultaneous awareness of the double meaning of the words, of the dual quality of the things meant. With its somewhat severe frankness, its somewhat dry precision, this language has literary merit of a high order, it is not a means of emotion, nor of beauty, but an apt instrument of persuasion and analysis.

Butler's work is of very varied interest. Primarily an essayist, a moralist, a critic, a philosopher, he was a novelist as well, but reluctantly. The first *Erewhon* is a series of
value through its irony,
mpared with *Gulliver's*
or was at pains over its
construction, and felt satisfied with the result, is full of a fancy yet too unreal for its logic to make much impression upon us. Only *The Way of All Flesh* can properly be called a novel; and Butler had not the courage to publish it while he lived. Its worth lies in the minute, accurate painting of

a picture. The stamp of artificiality is recognizable there on the fruits of too analytical an inspiration; and if, ignoring the rich substance of the thought, one wishes to dwell on the pleasure of mere form, this will be chiefly found in the most spontaneous parts of Butler's works; some chapters in

Erewhon, *Canterbury Settlement*, the letters, the episodes in the *Note-Books*, and those *Alps and Sanctuaries of Piedmont*, in which he opens to us such charming vistas through the land of free paganism, of sunshine, and of Christian art, which best contented all his tastes.

He had, and still has, no appeal to the many; he lacks, to win them, the eloquence of the heart, the poetry of feeling. But he has, since his death, risen to his full significance: that of a fertile and creative mind. He has exercised, and still exercises, an active influence on critical intelligences, which he awakes and stimulates. His most lasting contribution is probably in the intuitions of his philosophical thought; many of his paradoxes have become accepted truths; others might be accepted as well. As compared with Shaw, who has gone farther on the same track, he remains more national, and nearer the average man: he is a conciliator at bottom, and for that very reason quite English. An intellectualist by temperament, he is empirical in his conclusions; and he has so clearly emphasized the fecundity of instinct, that he is, all things considered, among those who have done most to make its claims again honoured.

3. *Meredith*.—Very different as he is from Samuel Butler, Meredith[1] nevertheless holds a rather similar position in the

[1] George Meredith, born in 1828 in Hampshire, of English family, with Welsh and Irish ancestors, passed two years as a schoolboy in Germany, studied law, married the daughter of Thomas L. Peacock, gave up the Bar for literature and journalism, collected his poems in a volume (1851), contributed to several periodicals, among them the *Fortnightly Review*, which he edited for a short time; from 1860 onwards he was reader of manuscripts for the publishing house of Chapman and Hall. Separated from his wife in 1858, a widower in 1862, he married, in 1866, Marie Vulliamy. His first novels: *The Shaving of Shagpat*, 1856; *Farina*, 1857; *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, 1859; *Evan Harrington*, 1861; *Emilia in England* (*Sandra Belloni*), 1864; *Rhoda Fleming*, 1865; *Vittoria*, 1867; *The Adventures of Harry Richmond*, 1871, were received, on the whole, rather coldly by the critics and the public. Success and, in its train, fame came with *Beauchamp's Career*, 1876; *The Egoist*, 1877; *The Tragic Comedians*, 1880; *Diana of the Crossways*, 1885. *One of Our Conquerors*, 1891; *Lord Ormont and his Aminta*, 1894; *The Amazing Marriage*, 1895; *Celt and Saxon* (a posthumous and unfinished publication) were less popular. He also published a critical essay, *On the Idea of Comedy, etc.*, 1877; short stories, *The House on the Beach*, 1877, etc; and poems: *Modern Love, etc.*, 1862; *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of the Earth*, 1883; *Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life*, 1887; *A Reading of Earth*, 1888; *Odes in Contribution to the Song of French History*, 1898; *A Reading of Life*, 1901; *Last Poems*, 1909, etc. He lived in the country, not far from London, surrounded by the cult of an *élite*, and died in 1909. *Works*, Memorial ed., 1909–11 (twenty-seven vols., bibliography by Esdaile); Standard ed., 1914. *Poetical Works*, ed. by Trevelyan, 1912; *Letters*, ed. by his son, 1912. See the studies by Le Gallienne, 1890; Jerrold, 1902; Legouis ('L'Égoïste de George Meredith,' *Revue germanique*, July–August 1905); Elton (*Modern Studies*), 1907; May Henderson (*George*

history of ideas. If temperaments are summarily classified, his will be found to contain the same duality in its elements. But the proportion between these is not the same; and besides, the power of an original personality matters much more than that general analogy of substance. In all essential respects, as an artist, as a writer, as a man, Meredith stands in a strongly marked contrast with Butler.

He belongs more unquestionably to the new Romanticism. Born under the declining sway of the first, he retained the

his own nature fitted him for the keenest play of a susceptible

, is fraught with enthusiasm;
He showers piercing arrows
, routine; but he makes no difference between the passivity of unconsciousness, and that of a spurious kind of logic. The most central effort in his work is aimed against the automatic exercise of thought. An apostle of science and of salutary truth, he renews and refreshes the sources of both. He teaches the free self-possession of the soul, the energy of a valiant and cheerful heart. He must be numbered among those who in the last quarter of the nineteenth century wage war against the encroaching progress of mechanism.

He has the gift, and feels the desire, of precise, close, adequate knowledge; and the subject that he wants to know is man. But his analysis works by a series of visions and *élans*; it re-creates its object much rather than it divides it. The most delicate shades of the moral world, like those of the

visible landscape, caught with the sharpest perception, ar
not isolated by him; he at once allows them to melt with al
others into a changing play of shapes and colours, the movin
fascination of which holds his gaze fast. A subtle psychologist
he is at the same time a lover of fancy, and a poet. So kee
is the eagerness that carries him to instantaneous notations
that he pays but very little heed to the indispensabl
connections of style; his art is that of an impressionist.

Such is the paradox of his work. Again and again it pro
claims to an empirical people the duty of having intelligenc
and thinking clearly. But the light with which it is itsel
flooded is trying and difficult; it surprises, dazzles, or fatigue
very many readers through the brightness of its rays, an
the constant intermittence of the radiating focus. It is
flashing and twinkling light. Nothing can be more distan
from such a method than a matter-of-fact order, a sever
sequence of ideas.

The genius of Meredith is thus stamped with a doubl
character. Through important features, it is related to th
group of Utilitarians, in the eyes of whom the most urgen
task is to make life more rational; through others, and mor
essential ones, he belongs to the lineage of the great intuitiv
thinkers. His youth felt at once the influence of a prophet
Carlyle, and that of an ironist, Peacock; he owed something t
his contact with the Germany of metaphysics and mysticism
and much to his elective taste for French balance and pene-
tration. There is in him a Celtic element, of which rather to
much has been made; his nature, however, is deeply English
The *Essay on Comedy* emphasizes the value of a refined idea
of artificial culture; *Richard Feverel* reminds us of the fragility
of systems, of the force of instinct, and leads our ambition
back to the primitive wisdom embodied in the individua
being. . . .

Thus richly provided with complexities, his work is im-
posing in the two fields of the novel and of poetry, less distan
with him than is usually the case. The novelist develope
according to his native preferences, and hardly followed an
model. His period of experiments was short. The fancifu
oriental tale, *The Shaving of Shagpat*, shows an invention tha
is brilliant and less purely verbal than one might well think
but it is not free from some exuberance—a weakness whic
Meredith was never to cure. The manner of Peacock crop
up at times in the narratives of the first phase—down t

Beauchamp's Career—in which the artistic intent of the writer is less deliberate. As a whole, the Meredithian novel is original, distinct, and can be legitimately studied in itself.

One should recognize in it two species, which roughly answer to the two successive parts of a long career. Each novel is organized, either round a theme of the traditional type, with a constructed plot; or about a purely internal subject. In the former case, the story more easily broadens into historical or social vistas. But whether the work keeps nearer to one or the other type, the essential object remains the study of characters. At bottom, the matter in hand is always psychological analysis. However elaborate and profuse the plot may be, and even when—as in *Vittoria*—it grows to an epic breadth, picturing the heroic struggle of a people for freedom, the main source of interest never lies in the events, nor in their material consequences. Fate, chance, and circumstances are either conditions or forces at work; they contribute to raise the stage upon which is enacted the only real drama, that of consciousness, whose parts are performed by passions and wills. In its systematic idealism, the novel of Meredith is not very dissimilar to the classical conception of tragedy.

It differs from it altogether in its atmosphere. Strength [illegible]

that of dreams and visions. The picture of existence is at the same time detailed and vague, steeped in a diffused sensibility which grows animated and interested, feels merry at the sight of the unconsciousness and absurdity of human beings, exalted at the magnificent sudden appearances of nature, grand and sober, or bright and broad. The rhythm upon which those scenes are unrolled is somewhat jerky and feverish; and every aspect of the universe is interpreted poetically. It is by its poetical quality, as well, that the psychology of Meredith is characterized; it perceives the inner life as essentially in motion; it throbs with a thrill of discovery and surprise; it is keen like the sudden rush of an emotion, quick like the fluctuations of an agitated soul; it is incomparable in its power of instantaneously catching the most evanescent shades. It is thus living, just as it is concrete; the figures and equivalents which it uses to render the

liquid yet interrupted flow of the stream of consciou
impart to us the direct sensation, not the abstract ic
it. Creative as it is in the very detail of its expressior
analysis is of an order superior to that of Browning.

The characters upon which it is brought to bear a
markable in their number, variety, and substance; ma
them have the minutely detailed features, the several
of increasing depth, peculiar to the beings whom our fa
acquaintance has probed below the surface. Meredith
lovingly studies the classes in which leisurely culture has
the mind the whole range and delicacy of its shades; in
manners have their full refinement, while their slighte
flections are loaded with meaning. But he has known a
how to make men and women of lower condition act
and speak, not without most often endowing them, it is
with a natural distinction. Any systematic intenti
realism is foreign to his temperament; he feels agains
artistic method a repugnance which he has more than
expressed.

The haughty figures of noblemen—a Lord Ormon
Everard Romfrey; the half-tone faces of indulgent sage
pretending philosophers, men of studious or leisurely h
the favourite creations of the humorist, the original chara
like the magnificent tailor whose memory presides over
Harrington; the young men carried away by their eage
whether it is selfish or more often generous, and learni
live—a Richard Feverel, a Beauchamp—preserve the cl
outline in our remembrance; and although such portrai
naturally into groups, they are highly individualized.
it is in the delineation of women that Meredith is at his
In this field lies for him a preference both of instinct a
principle. His susceptible genius has a touch of the fem
he champions the moral and social cause of beings to
the law made by man was for long, he thinks, more
than it was pleased to realize. The series of these he
is a chivalrous profession of faith. They often possess,
the charm of sweetness, a valiant energy, and a spi
brightness which throws into shade the more prosaic v
of the men. Lucy, Vittoria, Clara, Renée, Diana, Ar
Nesta, through their freshness, their purity, their courage
at the same time their sure, intuitive intelligence, ar
unworthy of their Shakespearian sisters. The imagin
which has created them has added to the treasure of h

nobleness some of its most graceful and most brillia
visions.

Meredith's thought is instinct with generosity. It fe
with the victims of the injustice inseparable from a soc
order based on authority. He carries within himself
democracy of the mind. Still, his temper is anything b
that of rebellion. His humour plays freely about the exist
hierarchy, without trying to destroy it. While he shows
that the son of a tailor can be a gentleman, he is aware

in t
for
nat
stro
its utilitarian narrowness, he seizes with rare acuteness
features of other national idiosyncrasies, no English obser
has better understood the moral nature of France.

To the genius of French manners he turns for the exam
of a literary and worldly life, subjected to the supervision o
sharpened perception, of a shrewd judgment, which repres
individual errors, corrects all excesses to the benefit o
balanced wisdom; and this active reason, the defender

problem. This study is of extreme penetration; but
analysis of Meredith is too intuitive to gain much by conc
trating on a single object; it has soon exhausted the esse
of an inevitable self-absorption; it hardly renews its effe

mechanical and forced. The wealth and the life of this book, which shows us a classical subject treated by the most impressionist of painters, are in accessory elements—the surroundings of the hero, the background, the energy of the imagination, and the style.

The style of Meredith has its phases, and, as it were, its degrees. It developed, through irregular stages, towards an extreme type, that of *One of Our Conquerors*. All along its curve it offers various aspects, either relatively normal or markedly original. When the latter predominates, we have a definite transition from the direct and constructed mode of expression, such as English prose had known till then, to the indirect and suggestive. Romantic prose-writers—and especially De Quincey—had abundantly turned to use the poetry of rhythm and the brilliance of images. Carlyle had broken up the logical mould of the sentence and substituted for it the strong hustling fragments of an impulsive thought. Meredith owes something to those predecessors; but his temperament as a writer is extremely individual. One might describe it as the paradoxical union of two elements: the discontinuity of a seer of visions, to whom the universe is dissolved into a shifting network of fragmentary appearances; and the subtlety of a thinker, to whom things are interesting only through the abstract relations which the mind extracts from them, and which make them for it interchangeable.

The effect of these two combined tendencies is to produce under the reader's eyes a throbbing, rapid, piercing series of intellectual flashes, each of which reveals a facet of an infinitely varied world, and casts over it a ray, not of simple light, but of luminous analogy. The expression of things is always transposed; and the transposition takes place into the tone of intelligence. The search for correspondences is the triumph of this style. In this respect, it is indeed the token of a new era—that in which reviving or enduring Romanticism mingles with the predominant intellectuality and gives birth to symbolism. Meredith discovers the suggestive symbols of feelings or material objects in the delicate and rare shades of ideas, as they have been fixed by the vocabulary of philosophy and analysis; and thence the strong Latin element in his style, often loaded with the polysyllabic terms of abstract thought. But not only does he use this category of signs; he knows how to work up the fund of concrete vocabulary. In each word of the latter class he dissociates the peculiar sensation to which

it answers, and handles the quality thus extracted as a me of equivalence; so that it is still to the purposes of a sym ist that he employs the graphic stock of popular langu Admirable in its unexpectedness, its vigour, its compactn that style is strained to a degree which the average m cannot long bear; it will tire the most quick-witted or practi reader, and indeed it tends as to its natural ideal towards far-fetched obscurity of the 'metaphysical' poets of seventeenth century. The revealing, striking illuminati the pleasure of an ever intense intellectual activity, or new, fresh, humorous perception of life and things, do make us forget the strangeness, the effort, the incessant

of

ind

Me ... more legi

rhy ... more purified form, of philosophical lyrici His verse differs from his prose through a superior densit more open stressing of the idea. The more substantial par his positive thought is enclosed in it, whether he still trea dramatic theme, as in *Modern Love*, or immediately en upon the fervent meditation, at once personal and gene which is to him poetry itself.

The doctrine of

the m

to nob ... is the very princi

not the negation, of the religion of the mind

dwells in

of man,

must a ... eyes

imagina ... teaches us an order ... virt

and in our ... y. T

Wor

re v

... the h

... *The Woods of Westermain*. It finds nourishment in elements that are not so simple, and establis more subtle relationships between the influences of the s or the sky, and our soul. It does not directly deal w scientific and metaphysical problems; but one feels that it breathed the atmosphere of metaphysics and science.

it teaches, is made up of his instincts, in which the blood voices its needs; of the working of his brain, which understands, accepts, and judges; and of his spiritual faculties, in which there grows, through the passion of morality, the promise of a dimly descried future. The wise shall repress instinct without losing touch with the earth, their mother; shall hearken to intelligence, ask her for the rules of social well-being, but shall rise above them to follow the heroic intuitions of the heart. Thus, within the framework of nature and the seasons, the intense hours of life will leave us not in a discordant, but in a consonant state with the universe.

This message is lofty, and in itself able to call up high and pure intellectual emotions. The poetry of Meredith lends them as an instrument the resources of metre, boldly used in the most varied forms, with uneven success, admirable achievements, less felicitous licences, but without anything that may remind us of the most prosaic jars of Browning; and he still retains ... the means of expression of his prose, at a yet higher ... of tension. His poetry thus possesses an extraordinary ...ation, and compresses an excessive sum of stimula... d challenges into a minimum number of words. It is ... like his prose, and indeed more difficult. It reaches effects of the same order, with a more developed ...; it is as fond of the ample sonorousness and ... suggestiveness of learned words. Its most ...ces are not the best; it is when in contact with a ..., and uttering relatively spontaneous accents, ... the maze of an obscure symbolism, which it ...ches dangerously, or indeed enters. Meredith ...pieces of a kind in which none of his con... Rossetti, can be compared with him. But ... be appreciated by more than a few; they ... his novels; and while he has expressed ...hy in them, he has not poured into them ...et's soul which his prose has not already

... long time met only with a critical re... recognized, and at last hailed as a ... zenith of his fame on the morrow of his ... has begun for him. The dogmatic ...ences of heart or mind, which his ... in hiding, make him nowadays ... was his, and against which he

fought without escaping its sway. His inventions lack th
artistic organization towards which the present seems to b
once more returning. The extremely rare and person
quality of his genius grows to an excess in peculiaritie
even in mannerisms, which the passing of time makes mo

architectural wholes, are not built on unexceptionable plan
Many parts of his work will age the sooner for it, although th
future will probably rank him with the greatest writers of h
time.

4. *The Pessimists: Thomson; Hardy; Gissing.*—The idea
progress had coalesced with the rational system of the Uti
tarians and the evolutionists. The maxim of the greate
happiness of the greatest number not only defined a princip
or an ideal, but expressed a confident hope. From the Da
winian struggle for life, Herbert Spencer had made out th
trend of civilization in its entirety towards a higher com
plexity which was at the same time a perfection As a whol

of sensibility takes place, however It challenges, not inde

Thomson, Hardy, and Gissing acknowledges the mechanic
conception of things as an intellectual truth, but it makes
incompatible with the peace of conscience, and thus, in th
long run, makes it itself impossible, it is the beginning of
revolt against mechanism.

The second James Thomson[1] is a great poet. He is su

naturally, is gifted with rare vigour, with an inborn sense of form. A son of the people, he never received the benefit of the finest culture. He makes up for it through his intuition; his rhythms, his style, instinctively aim at fullness, happiness of phrase, a sober and pure strength; they often reach their aim. But their merit is not of absolute solidity; the art has its flaws, the artist's taste its deficiencies. The wonder is that his talent, self-taught as it was, should have tended to true perfection, through the errors of a superficial Romanticism, the chances of a cruel and disturbed existence.

He was born for joy, and did not seek his tragic fate out of a secret readiness. He tasted, and even sang, the pleasures of life. If his inspiration soon grew darker, and if he became the poet of pessimism, it was under the shock of incurable moral suffering, and in consequence of a self-abandonment of the will, of periodic fits of intemperance, for which he was doubtless partly responsible, but to which he was driven as well by organic heredity.

His work is more varied than could be augured from the painful obsession betrayed by his greatest poem. He has delightful outpourings, light graces or eager raptures. *Sunday up the River*, a modern idyll, mingles touches of delicate dreaminess with a frankly plebeian humour. *He heard her sing* is an ecstatic piece with the broad, strong sweep of an organ *largo*. *Weddah and Om-el-Bonain*, an oriental tale, full of Shelley's influence, along with its blemishes inlays tender, passionate images in charming lines.

But one central theme is the outstanding feature of Thomson's work: the pain of living and the sombre majesty of despair. This motive is sketched in *To Our Ladies of Death*, receives in *Insomnia* a late and strikingly vivid variation, and is fully developed in *The City of Dreadful Night*, a series of symbolic visions.

---

made the acquaintance of Bradlaugh (see above, Book vi, Chap. II, sect. 4), and returning to London in 1862 associated himself with the other's apostolate of free-thinking. After various attempts, he lived poorly by his pen; a victim to melancholia and fits of intemperance, he died in hospital in 1882. He had published in the *National Reformer* polemic articles, essays, verses, notably *The City of Dreadful Night* (1874); added this poem to others (1880); and further published *Vane's Story, Weddah and Om-el-Bonain, etc.*, 1881; *Essays and Phantasies* (in prose), 1881. After his death appeared *Satires and Profanities*, 1884; *Biographical and Critical Studies*, 1896, etc. *Poetical Works*, ed. by Dobell, 1895; *The City of Dreadful Night, etc.* (selected poems), 1910. See the biographies and studies by Dobell (*The Laureate of Pessimism*), 1910; Salt (*The Life of James Thomson*), 1914; Meeker, 1917.

The symbol is the image of a city of darkness, where the

architecture is that of dreams; it is made of the fabric of our imaginings. Down its streets, furrows of heavy dusk, ghosts move mingled with the living; and on the banks of the river of suicides which flows through it, in the dark temple where

mare.

Thomson found, thanks to his instinctive art, the fit means for the full realization of his poetical fancy: stanzas of varied texture, borrowed from the verse-writers of the past, but all stamped anew with the imprint of his personality, directed the similitude of their tone— accompanied and confirmed rhymes; and a language instinct with dense, harsh energy, now and then relieved by the biblical or oratorical solemnity of archaisms or Latin adjectives.

His personality has other aspects; there was in him a polemic of free thought and democratic action, sincere, but of inferior literary quality; an essayist; a critic with just, vivid perceptions, who has known how to recognize new merits, and to renew the appreciation of old ones; and a prose-writer who displays, like the poet, an accurate discriminating sense of the values of words.

With Thomas Hardy,[1] the reaction of a robust nature

[1] Thomas Hardy, born near Dorchester in 1840, prepared himself for the

against a philosophy that was too easily self-satisfied assumes the character of one of those complete breaks, through which men of energetic temperament will stand up against their times. In some respects there is in him a Rousseau, as extreme in his revolt, but different in his self-mastery, his massive dignity, his admixture of calm with bitterness. Not only does he deny the hope of a happiness founded upon the progress of critical reason; it is the whole of modern civilization that he condemns, and his sore heart seeks, as a wounded animal would, the shelter of the most primitive and untouched earth.

Brought up to the profession of architect, he receives a mixed culture, in which precise notions, the sense of volumes and of equilibrium, are joined to a process of artistic refining; he gets at the same time acquainted with the material structure of the world, and with the aesthetic character of its outlines. To this apprenticeship of intelligence and sensibility he joins the awakening of imagination through the influence of history. The deeper foundations of his thought are those of the Victorian mind: positive data, a respect for science, curiosity as to the cosmic and human past. Upon this basis, others about him were raising the cult of omnipotent evolution, of fruitful industry, of pacific democracy. His original instinct, after a quick transition, settles in a coherent system of directly opposed beliefs, which at times are formulated, at times remain latent, and are revealed only through powerful concrete expressions.

He accepts science, and feels its spell, but joylessly. His tastes lead him away from the fever and fret of industry. A meditative and solitary man, he keeps in harmony with the austere though verdant countryside of Dorsetshire, where he spent his boyhood; and it is there, in retirement, that his life

Poems, etc., 1898; *Poems of the Past and Present*, 1902; *The Dynasts* (Part I, 1904; II, 1906; III, 1908); *Time's Laughing-Stocks, etc.*, 1909; *Satires of Circumstance, etc.*, 1914; *Moments of Vision*, 1917. He died in 1928. *Works*, Wessex ed.; Pocket ed. (Harper); *Collected Poems*, 1919. See the biography by F. E. Hardy, 2 vols., 1930; the studies by L. Johnson (*The Art of Thomas Hardy*), 1894, new ed., 1923; Hedgcock (*Thomas Hardy, penseur et artiste*), 1911; Lea (*Thomas Hardy's Wessex*), 1913; Abercrombie, 1912; H. Child, 1916; L. W. Berle, 1917; H. C. Duffin (*Thomas Hardy, a Study of the Wessex Novels*), 1916; M. L. Cazamian (*Roman et Idées en Angleterre*), 1923; J. W. Beach (*The Technique of Thomas Hardy*), 1923; E. Brennecke, *Thomas Hardy's Universe*, 1924; H. B. Grimsditch, *Character and Environment in the Novels of Thomas Hardy*, 1925; P. Braybrooke, *Thomas Hardy and his Philosophy*, 1928; S. C. Chew, 1928; A. McDowall, *Thomas Hardy, a Critical Study*, 1931; D. Cecil, *Hardy the Novelist*, 1943.

law greater than ourselves.
the theory of an immanen
ough a blind striving I
ings appear to us crushed by a superior force: that of nature, first, and of an indifferent, so most often a hostile chance; en, that of the errors implied in our own desires. Whether creed is fatalism or determinism, he is haunted by the ion of necessity. He grasps it grandly, like a tragic poet, d illustrates it with unwearied persistence.

As an artist, he finds himself soon enough, but he shows ressive phases, and a rather sinuous line of development.

traces of a fanciful invention in the action and the aracters (*A Pair of Blue Eyes*, *The Trumpet Major*, etc.). e essential originality of his temperament is included in lf a dozen books of a more deliberate realism, of a closer

odlanders, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*).

They all are novels of provincial, and even rustic life, for if e scene is sometimes shifted from the country to the towns, ese are sleeping boroughs or cities, flooded by the influences the fields. Oxford, the great university, which lifts its

this land of memories, where hills are crowned with Roman camps, and where barrows hide even more ancient remains, the fates are unrolled of heroes placed in a lower or middle condition. The most frequent types are those of peasants and professional men, the latter having themselves risen from the people. Hardy has a preference for characters of a sturdy and painful intellectuality, won over the hard heredity of a family rooted to the soil.

His plots are not simple. They grow out of elementary passions: ambition, greed, love, jealousy, the thirst for knowledge; and the springs which move them are psychological. More and more as he progresses in his career Hardy tends to shift the construction of his novels to the inner world; he writes a moral drama, shows us a conflict of contradictory wills, guided themselves by feelings. But the development of these conflicts is crossed at every moment by accidents which interrupt them. Ironical, malevolent, fatal chance is as it were an invisible third party in all the relationships of human beings; now it seems to express an obscure cruelty lurking in the universe; now, in a more philosophical guise, it is the experimental revelation of laws which individuals in their self-deception ignore, and against which probability demands that they should be some day crushed. In this latter sense, chance becomes the chastisement of the unavoidable selfishness of every life. Whether one aspect or the other is predominant, the repeated working of that inimical luck is largely responsible for the tragic atmosphere which Hardy's heroes succeed but rarely in escaping.

And yet theirs are strong-willed souls. The solitude and concentration of country habits have saved them from the dispersion and constant wear that eat up the town-dweller. There are some among them whose vitality has been impaired by reflection, by art, and the exhausting work of the intelligence; but their energy dies hard, and the deadly strain is a long time conquering them. Clym Yeobright, Henchard, Jude, are three different aspects of that rustic robustness, struggling against the experience of pain or the disease of thought. The women of Hardy are closer to the instinctive stage, more elementary, as it were, in good or evil; he has wanted to make them either the tools of the life-force, or the victims, easily overcome, of a cruel fate rendered heavier by the sensibility of their hearts.

However interesting they may be—and many among them

original figures, with strong, unforgettable features—the
racters of Hardy do not bear the
ey are
ator
d he ... the building is
nd, ... and joints are visible. There occur, in
development of these beings, sudden crises and breaks,
les, one might say, where one feels an arbitrary decision
her than an inevitable growth. Quite other characteristics
vail in the descriptions and the painting of the background.
re it is that Hardy is most certainly and constantly
pired.

rom his earliest works he tried his hand at the delineation
andscape; and while he at first added nothing new to the
me, he showed freshness, an accuracy of touch and tone
ch bespeaks an intimate knowledge of the country. The
llic scenes in *Far from the Madding Crowd* are worthy of
ng compared with the most truthful pictures that English
se had yet produced in that line. With *The Return of the
Native*, *The Woodlanders*, *Tess*, we come upon effects more
powerful and of a rarer quality, aimed at with a sure and
certain skill. A great poet of nature there freely displays an
exceptional gift for description which ...
perception ...

What ... precision,
Hardy ... accumulating senses of an observer who
takes in things with an attention at the same time analytical
and impassioned. His records of impressions owe nothing
to literature; they are wholly direct, and grow out of the
object itself; as they formulate what the most impressionable
peasants would subconsciously register, they extend our knowledge at many points. No one before him has caught, or at
least expressed through words, the peculiar rustling of the
wind in the tiny bells of dried heather blossoms. Such extremely delicate perceptions, however, are not so striking
as are some broad, strong intuitions, in which imagination
has its share. The special aspect of ... gions, the
... seen and
... those creations
... tendencies in the writer's temperament, his
tastes are secretly guiding the preferences of his sight Hardy
has most lovingly described the elementary, grand, and sad

which is freest from human dwellings; he loves the sea, but does not often describe it, not finding himself sufficiently familiar with its moods; he loves more to paint the woods, where the seasons go through the infinitely varied circle of their changes far from all profane onlookers; the vales, the rich pastures, the sober hills of his native district; the bare uplands where the furrow of a Roman road runs straight and empty to the horizon; and the gloomy vastness of the moor, in which every living being vanishes as if swallowed up in the depth of the centuries whose image is called up by its immobility.

Description, when it reaches this degree of symbolic breadth, is loaded with philosophy. Hardy's gaze perceives time as well as space. The past of the world casts a spiritual but visible shadow over the surface of a globe grown old, where the brightest rays are shorn of the gaiety of young light. The ashes of the dead fertilize the mould, and give the flowers their beauty; the ploughshare brings up the tools, the arms of the first masters of a soil which we believe ours, and whose aspect is to us familiar and reassuring, because we are not acquainted with the lugubrious dramas that are hidden in it. To see spring bloom or autumn ripen is to call up within the only setting that is unchanged the long history of mankind, still ravaged by the same passions, overwhelmed by the same fate, vainly seeking a cure for its anguish in an aimless agitation. Hardy's pessimism is not only a way of thinking; lived by his most instinctive sensibility, it imbues all his visions; it is the very essence of his admirable poetry of nature.

His last novels are the most hopeless. What had been a general bent of mind is accentuated here by coming into contact with moral or social problems. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* calmly calls up the sufferings which the inequality of the sexes and the hasty indifference of the law add to the evils that the flesh inherits. *Jude the Obscure* is the most powerful of the books in which the fatigue of modern vitality has expressed, exemplified, and justified itself in principle. Hardy here renounces whatever alleviation, were it a sad one, the attention paid to landscape brought to the bitter spectacle of human pains. He draws closer to complete realism, free from all violence, but destitute as well of all secret leaning to indulgence, than does any of his contemporaries; and the example of French naturalism is probably not without some influence upon this change. The story of an intellectual vocation,

ruggling against the yoke of fleshly appetit
pen or hidden
oubt which
ncere art.
te such mor . deficiencies; it possesses
o spontaneous perfection, no easy rhythm, and as it grows
eedless of beauty, recedes too far away from it. But in spite
its slow progress, and somewhat

a deeply studied and
portrait of a girl in whom the conflict between
rain and instinct is endued with the unstable charm of
omplexity. With this book Hardy took his leave of the
ovel, a literary kind whose limits his dismayed public seemed
o signify he had stretched too far.

Thereafter he published hardly anything but poems. With
m, the unity of temperament which
rose-writer
man
arked

perceptible strain, to a
the same time, and with an
ievitable rhythm, with pieces whose music is inseparable
from their suggestion Hardy has incorporated in his novels
some fragments which had first been written in
of his poems
from prose.
tion, the eco epithets
and images; rough and singularly rich in
associations, through its large number of old Saxon roots, and
of words racy of the soil. Abounding as it is in striking
phrases, whose meditative echo long reverberates within us,
this austere poetry is among the most vigorous and personal
in modern English literature.

It sings the same
live at the core o
them with a more
yet more frankly of his pessimism They
give us the reaction of his thought to events, discreet hints
as to his sentimental life, a summary account of his readings

and his travels; they are a precious document t
moral biography. The abhorrence of war, th
consciousness of human misery, the moving m
realization of an unknown God and an impassiv
the anguish of the times, the curiosity and obsess
centuries, are with a rich humour the main asp
philosophical lyricism.

The philosophy which animates it, and which alr
its favourite stimulus in history, has expressed itsel
in the original form of a dramatic epic poem f
history. *The Dynasts* is a work of the broadest
posing through its general conception, through the
of ideas which supports the actual fate of nations
the fight between Napoleon and Europe, and, b
earthly battlefield, the symbolic impressions of su
onlookers. The effort is of unequalled boldness
precise fact in it mixes with the freest imaginatio
outline of an event with the fluidity of mystic vision
as a whole is strange and grand. Long stage di
prose now and again break the lines. Here once
manner has not the easy suppleness of happy art;
into rough edges and irregular rhythms. The force
glow of ironical and pathetic ardour, which heats
and raises such a mass, though it fails to melt it in
and coherent body, awakes a respectful and serious
in the reader. The characters, while they are not
with equal care, are interesting, even if some of
hardly be accepted historically. The light that
heaven upon this succession of moving scenes sets c
contrasts and brings out vivid climaxes among t
voices of the invisible witnesses draw the lesson
resignation, which Hardy has been ever teaching,
series of catastrophes governed by an indifferent
here a glimmer of hope dawns in the darkness; as s
poems had already hinted, the blind force that drive
seems to be gradually growing conscious; and we a
to look forward to a future when a less insensible
preside over our destiny.

Nothing is more instructive than to compare Gis

[1] George Robert Gissing, born at Wakefield in 1857, studied at C
Manchester, was destined for the teaching profession. An impru
ruined his career; he experienced great privations in America an
from 1880 onwards he lived by giving lessons and performing
lishers, in a state of poverty which only increased with time

Dickens. In spite of striking analogies, their works have qui
different tones. The inevitable oppositions between person
artists contribute much to this difference; but something
due as well to the distinct tempers of two successive age
Gissing, like his revered master, early received the stamp
social suffering; his youth underwent severer trials. Bitte
ness sank to the core of his nature, and permeated all h
fibres; it became the very food of his imagination. If t
outlook of his thought was thus darkened, while Dickens ha
preserved his courageous cheerfulness, the reason is first th
there was not in him the triumphant surge of humour, t

was confirmed in his realism by the example of writers who
science had marked with its austere stamp. It is certain th
he felt the influence of the French naturalistic movement-
from Flaubert to Zola. A contemporary of Maupassant, I
infused like him, into the pitiless determination to see and
point out the truth, the sadness of a closing century, exhauste
with cruel certitude, afflicted with the profound starvation
its most spiritual desires.

Dickens had depicted evil in order to seek, in order
announce, its cure; each abuse called for a reform; behir

built on greed, indifference, or hatred. This sombre philosophy inspires to the end a work and a life which in their last stage show a perceptibly relaxed strain, without ever being freed from sadness.

Gissing's best novels are those in which he has most strictly focused his attention on the classes whose intimate knowledge and haunting horror he preserved within himself; whether the poverty studied is that of the London slums (*Demos, The Nether World*), or of starving writers (*New Grub Street*); or whether, crossing the limit between the two worlds, he relates the adventurous career of a son of the people who, through no other means but his ambitious intelligence, wins acceptance for himself among the elect (*Born in Exile*). On one occasion, he was attracted by a special problem, the woman question, and treated it from the point of view of the middle class (*The Odd Women*). With varying concentration and intensity the same heavy atmosphere hangs over those tales; they are, as it were, the several episodes of one harsh prose epic, that of the suffering implied in the social order, or in human nature.

No one has drawn a more striking nor, in some respects, a more exact image of the joyless surroundings among which the lives of the most numerous class are set in London. His realism is only partly rooted in the instincts of his nature; in him the Romanticism of his early years is quivering, still full of life, under the discipline of a will which denies itself the right to feel, because feeling is the refuge of the weak, and entices the mind away from truth. But if realism with him is not part and parcel of his most spontaneous artistic impulses, it is put into practice by a reflective intelligence; it is remarkably robust and sincere. While it is courageous, it is laboured as well; and this conscientiousness is not free from a touch of heaviness. The picture of a mediocre reality is made up of deliberate strokes of the brush, with painstaking precision; each stroke shows us its object with an accuracy which reveals at the same time the correct vision of clear-sighted eyes, and the determination of a mind which has exorcised all fallacies from its outlook. A strong, crushing impression of infinitely sad truth emanates from those images; the sadder, as even the poetry of an inverted idealization, of a dramatic intensifying of ugliness, is almost nowhere to be found in them.

It is not always wanting, however; Gissing sometimes, in spite of himself, or willingly, indulges in imaginative renderings. As if he confessed the bankruptcy of that absolute

interpret reality, compress it into shortened views, magnify it into symbols; he discreetly pours out upon it the passion with which his soul is overflowing. Then it is that the drab objectivity of the story assumes its full value; it throbs with a moving eloquence, and the gloomy atmosphere is shot through with tragic gleams.

Gissing's heroes are studied patiently, conscientiously, from the outside, with an uneven penetration which often reaches only the largest springs of their moral being, but even then reconstructs its mechanism with logical accuracy; which sometimes again, thanks to a more direct intuition, made up of sympathy or hatred, and pregnant with the tacit avowals of a wounded personality, creates characters of a profound or subtle truth. No one of these persons is the author himself; but several are connected by some fibres with his feeling of self. The Godwin Peak of *Born in Exile*, the Reardon and the Biffen of *New Grub Street*, the Sidney Kirkwood of *The Nether World*, owe part of their convincing power to the bitter experience of the unjust decrees through which nature and society will crush noble ambitions; in the same way, a Jasper Milvain owes his truth to the author's acute perception of the easy virtues through which some lax consciences believe they deserve their brilliant rewards, and do deserve them in the eyes of the world, thus depriving a scrupulous and obscure rival of the last revenge which his pride could expect, the pleasure of despising them.

The interrelations of those beings, the succession of their attitudes and acts, the words that pass between them, obey rhythms more firm and laboured, here again, than they are quick, elegant, or facile. The dialogues in Gissing are half-way between the reality of spontaneous speech and the fiction of a

of having to conquer a social prejudice, and wishing to show itself. In spite of his occasional efforts as a destroyer of shams, Gissing, in fact, is no dissenter from the traditional

enthusiasms of his mind choose their objects in the field of classical humanism.

It is to these aspects of his inner being that the other parts of his work should be traced back: the novels either purely fanciful, or instinct with a freer imagination and a more temperate realism; the sketches of travel on the shores of the Ionian Sea, in which the sense of landscape is refined and developed to a high artistic quality; the critical or personal essays, such as the study of Dickens and *The Private Papers of Henry Ryecroft*. These writings testify to a felicitous variety of talents, in an author who might seem condemned to a cheerless monotony.

His premature death prevented Gissing from reaping the full benefit of his gifts. He might have still renewed himself. But probably he had already stamped his personality most durably on the novel. He will live as the most sincere expression, through his strong and his weaker features, of one of the darkest moments in modern social thought.

On the contrary, with another realist, inclined as well to painful meditation, the sincerity of a tender conscience did not exclude resignation to life. The pessimism of Hale White [1] is a discreet flavour, so much mingled with charity, and even with love, that its bitterness tends to vanish. His creations have neither the abundance nor the strength of those of Gissing; they are restricted to a narrow circle. The range of one class, the dissenting lower-middle; of one psychological problem, the conflict of the craving for truth with faith, with action and happiness, circumscribes them all. But within this modest field the drama which is enacted is that of human destiny, in the shape which it owes to the spiritual sufferings of our age. The *Autobiography* and the *Deliverance* of Mark Rutherford hardly relate anything but the experience of a soul that gives itself away altogether, an experience connected by the simplest incidents with some delicately painted episodic

[1] William Hale White, born at Bedford in 1830, prepared to enter the ministry of his sect, but was debarred on account of his too free ideas on biblical inspiration; he published pseudonymously *The Autobiography of Mark Rutherford*, 1881; *Mark Rutherford's Deliverance*, 1885; *The Revolution in Tanner's Lane*, 1887; *Miriam's Schooling*, 1890, etc.; under his own name, a translation of Spinoza (1877); a study on Bunyan, 1905; the elements for a real story of his life: *Pages from a Journal, etc.*, 1900; *The Early Life of Mark Rutherford, by Himself*, 1913. He died in 1913. See A. E. Taylor, 'The Novels of Mark Rutherford,' *English Association Essays and Studies*, vol. v, 1914; Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, *Memories of Mark Rutherford*, 1924; Hans Klinke, *William H. White, Versuch einer Biographie*, 1930.

characters; the poetry or the nobleness of those tales springs from their intimate idealism. After the torments of religious doubt, they tell the assuagement which the will to goodness may find in the concentration on the proximate duties of life. Other studies by the same writer, more objective, have not the poignant intensity or the vivid appeal of the former. Those two books, written under a fictitious name by the most secretive of authors, have created a moral type, and exemplified in its unforgettable image the anguish, perhaps the cure, of many minds [1]

To be consulted: Gilbert Cannan, *Samuel Butler*, etc., 1915; *Cambridge* [illegible]

1800–1914, 1920.

[1] Pessimistic inspiration, mingled with other veins—the influence of Pre-Raphaelite refinement and disquietude, chiefly—rises to the surface in the work [illegible]

CHAPTER III

THE NEW ROMANTICISM

1. *Swinburne.*—Just as neo-classicism with Matthew Arnold was steeped in a persistent Romanticism, with Swinburne[1] neo-Romanticism includes within one and the same ardour the most diverse inspirations, among which is to be found the impassioned worship of Greek and classical beauty. The author of *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Poems and Ballads* yet holds, like that of *Merope*, a distinct place in the development of literature. Against the composite background upon which a century saturated with actions and reactions thenceforth traces the successive phases of taste, he stands out with the vigorous outline of a dominant characteristic. Through his immediate connections he is linked with the more refined aspects of Victorian poetry; the direct influence of Pre-

[1] Algernon Charles Swinburne, born in London in 1837, studied at Eton and Oxford and published without success two dramas of Shakespearian inspiration: *The Queen Mother* and *Rosamond* (1860). Two dramas of a different spirit, *Atalanta in Calydon* and *Chastelard* (1865), were not unnoticed. The first was followed at a later date by *Erechtheus* (1876); the second by *Bothwell* (1874) and *Mary Stuart* (1881). The *Poems and Ballads*, of 1866, meanwhile, provoked a scandal. Swinburne identified himself with the Pre-Raphaelite movement, and enthusiastically upheld the cause of Italian independence (*A Song of Italy*, 1867; *Songs before Sunrise*, 1871). From 1879 until his death (1909) he lived in retirement near London with his friend, Theodore Watts-Dunton, the critic and poet. His further publications include collections of verse or poems: *Songs of Two Nations*, 1875; *Poems and Ballads*, second series, 1875; idem, third series, 1889; *Songs of the Springtides*, 1880; *Studies in Song*, 1880; *Tristram of Lyonesse*, 1882; *A Century of Roundels*, 1883; *A Midsummer Holiday*, 1884; *Astrophel*, 1894; *The Tale of Balen*, 1896, etc.; dramas: *Marino Faliero*, 1885; *Locrine*, 1887; *The Sisters*, 1892; *Rosamund, Queen of the Lombards*, 1899. In prose he wrote: *William Blake, a Critical Essay*, 1868; *Essays and Studies*, 1875; *George Chapman, a Critical Essay*, 1875; *A Note on Charlotte Brontë*, 1877; *A Study of Shakespeare*, 1880; *Miscellanies*, 1886; *A Study of Victor Hugo*, 1886; *A Study of Ben Jonson*, 1889; *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, 1894, etc. His French work, for the most part unpublished, is considerable. *Poems*, 1904; *Tragedies*, 1905–6; *Selections* (ed. by himself), 1887; *Collected Poetical Works*, 1924. See the biography by Gosse, 1917; studies by Woodberry, 1905; Elton (*Modern Studies*), 1907; Richter (*Swinburne's Verhältniss zu Frankreich und Italien*), 1911; Thomas (*Algernon Charles Swinburne, a Critical Study*), 1912; Drinkwater (*Swinburne, an Estimate*), 1913; Welby (*Swinburne, a Critical Study*), 1914; Henderson (*Swinburne and Landor*), 1918; de Reul (*L'Œuvre de Swinburne*), 1922; A. Galimberti, 1925; H. Nicolson, 1926; G. Lafourcade, *Le Jeunesse de Swinburne*, 1928; idem, *Keats and Swinburne*, 1928; S. C. Chew, 1931; W. R. Rutland, 1931.

[illegible]

shadowed that endeavour, next, among the aims of the Pre-Raphaelites, the idealization of sensuality had found a place, and Rossetti was to be denounced shortly after.[1] But the [illegible] Victorian reticence [illegible] eventually let in the [illegible]

Here, again, [illegible] tion. He is no [illegible] Revolution of 1 [illegible] from France, h [illegible]

greatest masters of language, he relishes the piquant graces of Théophile Gautier. From Baudelaire, however, he receives the most subtle teaching. Through his lyrical work there runs a vein of conscious morbidity; the frenzy of passion, the proud bitterness of satiety, the tragic or sinister aspects of [illegible] characteristic accents In a [illegible] one catches there the [illegible]

Of all these mingled elements the temperament of Swin-

burne is made up. The art to which it tends is a Romanticism enriched and altered by the psychological experience and the intellectuality of half a century; it is symbolism, brilliant examples of which were being offered him in their several manners by Gautier, Baudelaire, and the Victor Hugo of the Guernsey period. His poetry is all instinct with an effort to seize the inner and not only the apparent meaning of natural forms; to listen with a tranquil and meditative soul to their silent voice; to render emotions, in the same way, by transferred expressions, more interesting than direct ones; and to turn nature into a manifold evocation of the great riddles of mind. Suggestion is the indispensable and most efficient instrument of such an art; for it utilizes the indirect elements of significance which belong to words as to images; and thus the aspects of nature, and the sounds of the words that express them, become the resources of a new technique, which ever aims at conveying some deeper and more subtle thing beyond its immediate object. Now, as this depth and this subtlety possess, of necessity, a note of intimacy and delicacy, and the value of fleeting and rare, or at least personal, shades, it is impressionism, the complement and habitual counterpart of symbolism, that already is adumbrated in the experiments and intentions of Swinburne. Here once more Rossetti, on English soil, had been his predecessor.

If he had exploited those new resources to the full he would have been one of those writers of genius around whom a whole generation can be organized. A very considerable poet, Swinburne yet is not the centre of his literary age. He lacked, to be such, the determination and sureness of instinct. Half transformed as it is by the aesthetics of symbolism, his art still remains involved in Romanticism pure and simple. What matters even more, among the possible instruments of symbolism, his temperament evinces a radical preference, in which a weakness is betrayed; he chooses the most accessible, though not always the most superficial one: the luxuriant fluency and the musicalness of vocabulary. It is almost exclusively from the dazzling abundance and sonorous quality of words that he expects the suggestion which will gather round poetic expression, prolonging and amplifying it. This tendency may have been encouraged by Victor Hugo's verbal virtuosity; still, it is spontaneous with Swinburne, and carries him farther than it did his master. So completely does he surrender to the intoxication of language that his inspiration,

very often, seems to follow no other guidance. The development of each poem, constructed on a simple impression or idea, obeys neither a principle of mental logic, nor an artistic judgment; it is shapeless, indefinite, monotonous, and stops only from exhaustion. Ceaselessly taken up again, the theme is illustrated by a profusion of images, itself governed by a profusion of words. It is the word which stands at the very centre of the thought, like the main theme in a symphony;

rhyme; but rhyme is very far from meeting all his needs; alliteration, whose sway extends over several words in the

an aspect of nature and with a mood, are thus, as in music, the real origin of many poems, whose frames they build up through their recurrence.

Such a method is acceptable in itself, chiefly when associated with a special order of poetry, and it has been given its consecration by frequent use in contemporary literature. But Swinburne, although in one sense he carried it very far, does not practise it in its true spirit, or with much originality. A musician, he remains at the same time an orator. Whilst

a feat in which the most consummate artists show their

sincere in their ardour, but insufficiently renewed and personal, the indirect suggestions which his symbolism offers us are of a rather limited range, either in variety or in delicacy. The most interesting—those, for instance, which he associates with
hern or eastern
music, on the
but not of the
most winning or the most ethereal kind. His ear, although very susceptible and safe in many respects, has not the richest or the most exquisite range as compared with those of

other English poets. His metrical displays are extraordinarily spirited and successful; he has handled with efficiency a vast number of measures and stanzas; an incomparable writer of verse at the beginning of his career, he remains so to the end. There it is perhaps that Swinburne has most certainly been an innovator; he has added to the prosodic scope of English poetry. His ease, unfortunately, results too often in profuseness; and he knows too rarely how to secure for an effect the supreme virtue of moderation.

His whole art is thus swayed by the predominance of one mental power, and that not the highest. His temperament, however abundantly gifted, had not received all gifts. When closely examined, the limitations of his genius are found to be intimately connected with an inner contrast which runs through his very being. In the boldest aims and intuitions of his poetry he is a man of his own time, nervous, high-strung, excitable, already attuned to the coming age. By the whole of his character, on the other hand, he is related to the most ancient tradition of his race. His instincts at bottom are akin to those of the psychological line of descent which, deriving from the Anglo-Saxon type, continues through the centuries, and reappears, in more or less modified forms, down to recent times. Some affinities are thus revealed between him and Kipling. He loves the sea, the wind, elemental forces, with a less spiritual, more physical and primitive passion than that of Shelley. He feels the spell of the drear, harsh landscapes in which the imagination of the Saxon seamen revolved. The enervating curiosities, the intellectualized sensations to which he seems to tend at one time, do not answer the deepest truth of his nature; he is too simple and traditional to be satisfied with decadence. We thus see him without wonder gradually shake off the affected perversity which at first shocked his readers, and move towards a kind of poetry, and feelings, that savour of orthodoxy; reconcile his republican faith with a patriotic admiration for Queen Victoria; demand freedom for Italy, while he refuses it to Ireland; and prelude in verse to Kipling's imperialism.

In the luxuriance of his metrical effusions there are moments of mastery and points of perfection; at such times a fuller emotion, a more poignant sense of the beauty of things, check their own expression before it has run to excess; or, as the case may be, a firmer and more lucid artistic intent controls a more balanced development in a calmer mind. Swinburne

has written short masterpieces; these are not of the highest order, but no other than himself could have written them.

They are to be found as early as the first series of *Poems and Ballads*, but chiefly in the second and the third; in the *Songs before Sunrise*; in the two dramas composed in imitation of Greek tragedy (*Atalanta*, *Erechtheus*), where such a genuine perception of Hellenism, such a true enthusiasm for classical beauty, are but rather imperfectly welded into a whole with an entirely modern inspiration. The mixture strikes one as artificial, and very different from its model, although the difference leaves it its worth. There are in the choruses of those dramas admirable pieces, universally known. It is still in its lyricism that the worth of Swinburne's poetry here resides; and lyricism remains everywhere the very soul of his [illegible] ubjects and kinds may b[illegible] least of all is it drama, [illegible] ac poems acquire animation and rise to a higher level as soon as in their progress they can catch on to one of his favourite themes—the sea, the joy of effort, the glory of life and the universality of death, the procession of the seasons, the power and the fragility of love, upon which his unwearied fancy weaves symphonic variations. To the end, the abundance and the quality of [illegible]

energy of form, and the heat of historical imagination.

Like the romantic generation of 1820, Swinburne had fed his youthful eagerness on the highly stimulating example of the Elizabethans. No one except Lamb has done more to instil new life into the forgotten reputations of Shakespeare's time. His critical work is copious, mixed, strong in spite of the monotony born of judgments ever intense, and of a sensibility impetuous to excess He had clear and profound perceptions, in a field where to perceive at all was common place, nor without merit. His enthusiasms, though not his disparagements, contributed to settle literary values He not only followed paths which had been already opened, and studied Ben Jonson and Chapman along with Shakespeare; he was one of the first to proclaim the genius of

Dickens, met in him with that courageous and sincere j
who does not fear to pay homage to contemporary wr
as if they had undergone the test of time.

2. *The Novel of Adventure: Stevenson, etc.*—The reviv
the novel of adventure springs at the same time from a rea
against the positive spirit of the century, and from the
impetus which carries the century towards an ever bro
widening of the field of knowledge and experience. Th
of steam and electricity sees the boundaries of the uni
recede even farther, and the last secrets of the earth beg
open; the desire to know assumes something of the app
for the marvellous. From the science of nature which
grows more prodigal of wonders, the transition remains
to the poetry of the supernatural. A new literature
its rise in scientific imagination. On the other hand,
far as the discipline of austere reason represses the nee
dreams, and the persistent craving for a free exercise of fa
the desire of the beyond in life and in art must overthr
barrier in order to satisfy itself, or at least it believes tha
barrier must be overthrown. So the direct or indirect
pressions which for a generation it has been receiving fron
idealistic renascence of religious faith, or of social charit
of the love of the beautiful, no longer prove sufficient
is now the whole intellectual temper of the period whi
inwardly modified; the order and hierarchy of literary mo
is upset; and certain themes are now asserting themse
after an unjustified eclipse, through a victory which is a
of the times.

Realism in itself bears a character of severity and nar
ness. It restricts our attention to a still vast, but circumsc
field; and what it excludes is precisely what remains
attractive to many minds. It focuses the artist's atten
on subjects either average and drab, or intense but pai
it implies the ruling passion for unmixed truth. Even
permeated by charity, it still clings to the soil of ever
mediocrity. Hardly has the documentary method of Tro
and Reade borne its characteristic fruits, when the tastes
preferences which cannot be reconciled with it make
hostility clear, and prepare for a counter-offensive. Steve
is fully aware that his work is prompted by a desire to a
the naturalism of Zola.

Realism, however, could enter into a friendly alliance
the search for the sensational. In the novels of Wilkie C

and Reade it was combined with an eager interest in the mysterious and the terrible; it would pass at will beyond the limits of the normal, and did not even stop at the bounds of the real.[1] In this way, again, the new Romanticism continues the preceding age. But literary periods draw their [illegible]

balance and order that underlay the Victorian age. That need never dies, and least of all can the English genius cease to feel it. At no time had great explorers been more numerous. The personality of Burton[2] makes the link visible that connects the conquest of the far unknown with mysticism and imaginative literature. The success of the book in which Kinglake[3] describes the East with elegance and yet with genuine sincerity is due to the fascination of the subject, no less than to the talent of the author.

No figure is more original than that of Borrow.[4] His career developed through the very heart of the Victorian period, but morally he does not belong to it; his inner nature rather makes him a forerunner of the following generation. He has to the highest degree the gift of possessing his spiritual independence without any outward rebellion. Whilst the social hierarchy is growing more imperious than ever, and respectability is stiffening into a dogma, Borrow achieves his freedom through the elusiveness of his roaming existence. His is the individual instinct, the initiative through which so many Englishmen redeem the psychological passiveness of their nation as a whole. His tastes lead him among the wanderers of the road—gipsies and tramps; he shares their life, learns their language, and finds occasion on the wayside for engrossing adventures in the most simple meetings and

[illegible]

18

18

lents. In Spain, where he is sent by an English associa- as missionary and distributor of Bibles, it is to the common ole that he turns; and his deep intuition of all that is an reveals to him the familiar intimate truth of a foreign He travels in Wales, and no exotic land seems richer nchanting experiences. His art is very conscious, and so not always succeed in hiding itself; even when he is fully adhering to facts, his relation is too clever not to e the suspicion of literary insincerity. Whatever the case be, such a genuine sense of the unexpected, of the fresh lty contained in the nearest horizons as well as under nt skies, is a fecund source of creation. It wells up in ind which carries with it everywhere an inexhaustible zation of the interest and the variety of things. Strange- here, as with Wordsworth and Coleridge, is not a property eings in themselves, but a quality of the imagination in h they are reflected.

om about 1870, more numerous are the paths attempted hat restless desire of renovation. The historical novel, se tradition had been kept alive by Thackeray, Dickens, l Lytton, George Eliot, Charles Reade, shows fresh ity. Blackmore's[1] tales answer to the need of mental ngement in time, and in space as well, for the surround- in which their plots are set, the high moors of Devon- , appeal to the imagination through their picturesque ness. Just as *Lorna Doone* testifies to the attraction of past, it points to the growing interest felt by the public e picturing of provincial manners, the study of which is ceforth the matter of a whole series of books. Blackmore invention, a poetical gift, a rather clever sense of effect; neither his pathos nor his humour is free from conven- l artifice. In the work of Shorthouse[2] history lends an orate background, of patient solidity, to the serious work- of a pious and sincere idealism. *John Inglesant*, which extolled in its day, meets to-day with unjust scorn. This re of religious life in England during the middle part of seventeenth century is drawn in accordance with the ncts of properly Victorian aesthetics; the art of Short- e is not without some analogy to that of Tennyson's

ichard Blackmore (1825–1900): *Lorna Doone*, 1869; *The Maid of Sker*, etc. See F. J. Snell, *The Blackmore Country*, 1906; study by Q. G. , 1931.

oseph Henry Shorthouse (1834–1903): *John Inglesant*, 1881; *Sir Percival*, See *Life and Letters*, 1905.

Idylls of the King, and his mystic hero has the somewhat morbid spirituality of one of Burne-Jones's knights. However, the soft light which falls on that novel as from a stained-glass window blends gem-like hues into a harmonious tone, and the atmosphere of strangeness in which it is bathed is subtle enough to remind one of Hawthorne's manner.

Another symptom of the uneasiness which is then rising from the depths of Victorian consciousness is the attraction which it feels thenceforth towards the varieties of culture most opposed to that industrial civilization, the very type of which Great Britain seems then to be. An age of positive reason, stirred by so many secret fevers, becomes enamoured of the refined or fatalistic simplicity in which the Far East has for thousands of years found repose. On the very eve of Japan's transformation, Lafcadio Hearn[1] passionately discovers the heroic soul, the exquisite chivalry hidden within

founder nature. His books are a revelation; and the Anglo-Saxon world, secure in the proud possession of the rules of life which have so far sustained its strength, learns in them how to respect an ethics, a religion, an art, based on an entirely independent foundation.

with an intensity which half a century of increasing conscious-

;s has but stimulated the more; and he surrenders to it re thoroughly than Wordsworth did. Less influenced by iversity learning, though no less by science itself and books, d closer even to the daily experience of what he describes; more widely introduces into literature that wealth derived m the direct observation of fields and animals, which has n recognition there from the time of Gilbert White. The scriptions of Jefferies are of a minuteness which may well m excessive, whenever one refuses to share in the faith ich animates them: the ardour of an impassioned natural-1. His art, of superior worth in its accuracy, its sense of mal or vegetable life, its poetical freshness of perception, ks balance, does not know how to select and construct. e reflection and the taste are not here worthy of the vision. the other hand, his original intuition is in absolute control his sensibility, because his culture, being entirely self-made, es not oppose to it any negative social complex; the pan-ism of Jefferies is not merely the twilight of an ecstasy felt childhood; it is a complete, lived religion, free from the alloy an alien spiritualism; and his confession (*The Story of my art*), with its ineffectual, moving, stammering utterance, a psychological document of rare value.

Stevenson [1] is a born writer. He imparts a high artistic

Robert Louis Stevenson, born in 1850 in Edinburgh, was the son of an ineer, studied at the university, and sought a literary career; after writing ious essays, he sojourned in France and published original impressions: *Inland Voyage*, 1878; *Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes*, 1879. He went California; married an American lady, Mrs. Osborne (1879); collected his ral essays and literary criticisms: *Virginibus Puerisque*, 1881; *Familiar dies of Men and Books*, 1882; and short stories: *New Arabian Nights*, 1882; le *The Silverado Squatters*, 1883, describes western America. The great cess of a tale of adventure, *Treasure Island*, 1883, decided his calling. published *Prince Otto*, 1885; *The Dynamiter*, 1885; *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. de*, 1886; *Kidnapped*, 1886; *The Black Arrow*, 1888; *The Master of Ballan-*, 1889; *The Wrong Box*, 1889; *The Wrecker*, 1892; *Catriona*, 1893; *The Ebb e*, 1894. Extremely delicate in health, he set out on a long sea voyage in Pacific, after which he settled in the island of Samoa (1891), drawing from se experiences the material for *The Island Nights Entertainments*, 1893; *ilima Letters*, 1895. He died in 1894, leaving two unfinished novels, *ir of Hermiston*, 1896; *St. Ives*, 1898; a collection of early writings, *Lay rals*, etc., appeared in 1911. He had published poetry: *A Child's Garden Verses*, 1885; *Underwoods*, 1887, etc.; and written for the theatre. *Works*, sitala ed., 1923, etc. See the biographies by Graham Balfour (1901, new , 1915); R. Masson, 1924; J. A. Steuart, *R. L. Stevenson* (*Man and Writer*,), 1924; G. K. Chesterton, 1927; J. M. Carré, 1929; the *Letters of Robert is Stevenson*, ed. by Sidney Colvin, 1899; the studies by Baildon, 1901; p, 1905; Swinnerton (*Robert Louis Stevenson, a Critical Study*), 1914; Sir Raleigh, 1915; Sir L. Stephen (*Studies of a Biographer*, vol. iv), 1902; S. Hellman (*The True Stevenson, a Study in Clarification*), 1925; H. D. Pherson (*R. L. Stevenson, a Study in French Influence*).

1940]

quality to t
form.
In so doing
powers of lit
keen percepti
of ideas or w
bottom is al
sensualities o
concrete rea
characteristics
circumambient
its picturesq
conduct, and
remain the o
attention to li
instinct again
wants, once
Insipid and fe
and from the
profession, St
m, the need
about him.
essays, have
and the passi
enter into the
third analyse
from refl
direct data, to
or despise. I
and his artisti
of maturity w
With that c
is on his gua
sense of coura
by means of a
conscientious
alike standin
displays his o
to appear onl
of his life, he
heroism of his
the of the S
the grace of

quality to the novel of adventure, in its most declared form.

In so doing he deliberately returns to the primitive, fresh powers of literary creation. A refined nature, gifted with a keen perception of beauty, susceptible to the delicate shades of ideas or words, he is retained by a temperament which at bottom is almost Puritanic within the range of the inner sensualities of the soul. He observes, enjoys, and assimilates concrete reality—manners, physical features, and moral characteristics, outlines and colours of landscapes; the circumambient realism is felt in the wealth and the precision of his picturesque notations. However, a preoccupation with conduct, and the self-absorption of a meditative thought,

limpid and fecund sap which rises from elementary experience, and from the psychology of the child. Without any explicit profession, Stevenson gives his adhesion to anti-intellectualism, the need of which he experiences, like many others about him. His novels, his poems, his critical studies or essays, have their unity there. The first minister to wonder and the passion for dramatic adventure; the second subtly enter into the unsophisticated emotions of the young; the third analyse authors, their writings, or the wisdom which we learn from reflection, with a simplicity which goes straight to

With that charming and almost feminine nature, Stevenson is on his guard against softness or mawkishness; he has a sense of courage and virility; he wins over disease and death,

to appear only with modesty; far from exploiting the pathos of his life, he is at pains to hide it. The sweetness and the heroism of his nature are equally sincere. In him the strong fibre of the Scottish temperament keeps recognizable, under

mingled the fine artistic perception of France, and later on the voluptuous influences of the Pacific. France stands for a large share in the formation of his talent. The clear, exact, nervous, and smooth style, which from an early stage he selected for himself, bears the stamp of our best masters. He breathed the air of France at a moment when the triumph of naturalism was past its prime, and the symbolist revival was already dawning. The vigorous but exterior effects of the former school repelled him; with the promise of the latter, on the contrary, he may have felt his own affinity. The French character, in any case, revealed to him such of its inner secrets as could be made out from the talk of our Cevennes peasants, rather than from more conventional encounters.

The anecdotes and the sketches of *An Inland Voyage*, *Travels with a Donkey*, are narrated or drawn with an already unerring tact, a delightful sobriety, to which Scottish humour and French measure have contributed. *Treasure Island* was a delight to several generations of young readers on more than one continent, and grown-ups will dip into it again; the craft of the story-teller, the intensity of the episodes, the vividness of the exotic scenes and of the main characters, are merits in themselves; but they grow out of a more profound intuition—that of the imaginative appeal, of the dramatic progress, and the moral originality of the themes; and this is an intuition of a psychological order. The sinister cripple, Silver, is worthy of a great artist, and Stevenson owed the first outline of this figure to his rambles, in early youth, through the underworld of beggary and vice. The Scottish novels are very different from those of Sir Walter Scott; much more modern as they are and technically conscious, much more sparing in their method, they do not show the prodigious abundance, the careless creation of unforgettable characters, which remain the birthright of the master; still, in many respects, they bear being compared with them. Stevenson, like Scott, was steeped in the intimate knowledge of the manners and the people of Scotland; his landscapes, more intense, reap the benefit of the gradual inurement through which, in the course of the century, the wild and grand aspects of nature had been divested of the last remnants of their repulsive horror, and had become the familiar companions of the human mind. The structure of these novels, or their liveliness, is not everywhere equal, and does not hide the weaker moments of an undermined vitality. The last,

Weir of Hermiston, which was left unfinished, is by far the most concentrated, and promised to be a masterpiece.

In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* we find Stevenson attracted, as one could have expected, by the problems of the subconscious. At bottom it is an allegory in the manner of Bunyan; but modern psychology here broadens and renews the old ethics of Puritanism; and contemporary symbolism imparts to allegory a freedom of movement that is infinitely precious. The case of a dual personality is not studied with superior subtlety; but it is brought home to our imaginations with striking efficiency. This book would reach an exceptional order of artistic value were it not that its method is not kept with sufficient energy within the field of the implicit.

All that Stevenson wrote about the South Sea Islands, the refuge of his last years, is the work of a man gifted with a keen sensibility to landscape, and with a penetrating sense of primitive, child-like souls, broad-minded enough to accept the paganism of nature, and reconcile it with a spirituality freed from all dogmas. The essay-writer has a winning and yet shrewd manner, in which a smiling irony mingles with the clear-sightedness of disillusioned eyes. In their essential subjectivity, these essays bear some distant resemblance to those of Charles Lamb; less artistically wrought, less richly loaded with intentions, they make, as Elia had done, the writer's personality the very centre of his work. As a poet, Stevenson shows a simple felicity of phrase, a sensitiveness of soul, which constitute in themselves a sufficient inspiration, within an intimate and modest order of themes.

Stevenson devoted very attentive care to the art of writing. He knew the anxious quest of the exact word, the search for a cadence at the same time harmonious and not too markedly regular. His style is sufficiently nervous to bear such conscious filing and refining. It draws its strength from a very varied and supple vocabulary, in which the whole scale of learned shades meets with the most racy vein — popular, technical, or dialectal words. At times the exquisiteness of the form seems to exceed the just demands of the matter, and this is the single weakness of that prose. Therefore, the condensation and restraint of its best moments—in *Weir of Hermiston*, for example—raises it to its perfection. It then keeps, as it were, a classical quality in its eager but balanced Romanticism.

3. *Aesthetes and Decadents.*—The worship of beauty, with

Ruskin, had been a religion. It had fitted in easily with the demands of the moral and social ideals with which the Victorian age never ceased to be deeply imbued. It had tended to health and balance. Already in the Pre-Raphaelites, in spite of the pious and medieval tone which their imaginations assumed, a very different attitude was adumbrated; they made room for sensuousness by the side of enthusiasm. Swinburne, who felt their influence, glorified the beautiful with a reckless and blasphemous ardour, which seemed to adore it out of enmity to the useful gods. Through him, and through other channels as well, the French doctrine of art for art's sake was creeping into England; naturalism indeed, at one point, coincided with that principle, and like it placed the artist's activity outside of and above morals.

It is to such symptoms, and not to the gospel of Ruskin, that one must trace back the independent development of English literary aestheticism.

The master of this movement is Walter Pater.[1] In his scholarly retirement, the prophet of an esoteric faith, he teaches it with an intellectual and detached zeal. It radiates out through more or less direct applications, studies of civilizations and souls; on one occasion only it reveals itself unreservedly, and then, as if frightened at its own audacity, hides itself again. In this text where it is concentrated (the Conclusion to the *Renaissance*), its opposition to Ruskin's message is vividly brought out. The adept's duty is no longer to pursue through the efflorescence of natural forms the divine influx, the source of strength and of harmony with the will of the universe; beauty no longer is the blissful perfection of creatures true to the law of their essence; it no longer rests like a glory, in the societies of men, upon the summits of simple austerity and of heroism. Every social or moral consideration vanishes; one thing remains: the volup-

[1] Walter Pater (1839–94), fellow of Brasenose College, led at Oxford the life of a lay recluse, and through the magnetism of his work influenced a group of disciples, before exercising a much wider action in England. He published historical and critical studies: *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1873 (the Conclusion, omitted in the second and third editions, reappeared in the fourth, 1888); *Imaginary Portraits*, 1887; *Appreciations*, 1889; *Plato and Platonism*, 1893; *Greek Studies*, 1895; *Miscellaneous Studies*, 1895; and novels: *Marius the Epicurean*, 1885; *Gaston de Latour* (unfinished), 1896. *Works*, Library ed., 1910. See the biography by T. Wright, 1907; studies by A. Symons (*Studies in Prose and Verse*), 1904; A. C. Benson, 1906; E. Thomas, 1913; E. Bendz (*The Influence of Pater . . . in the Prose Writings of Oscar Wilde*), 1914; A. Beyer (*W. Pater's Beziehungen zur Französischen Litteratur und Kultur*), 1931; M. L. Cazamian (*Le Roman et les Idées en Angleterre*, vol. ii), 1935.

[illegible]

full ardour, such is the secret principle of an existence that actually possesses and rules itself. Far from giving itself away, it shall suck in the whole world, and absorb it for its own good; this devouring strain will wear it out in its turn; but death is the inevitable night, whose coming is delayed, but not prevented, by the mean thrift of thankless virtues; and nothing matters but the violence of the fire in which an ephemeral energy is irradiated by its very destruction.

[illegible]

less on the smiling aspects of epicureanism; it is urged by a more anxious impatience for life; it widens, too, the field of voluptuousness, introduces abundantly into it the emotions of knowledge. But it teaches no other wisdom; its aroma no less surely benumbs all the illusions or the beliefs which connect the life of one being with something beyond itself.

Pater did not always write, or think either, it seems, at that pitch. On other occasions his doctrine dwells on the contemplation, the analysis of beautiful forms; or even he brings into it an element which alters and amends it. *Marius the Epicurean*, the novel in which most of his philosophy, though not of his art, is to be found, seems to spiritualize the search for pleasure as far as sacrifice pure and simple.

Such an extension of the principle no doubt implies that hedonism is diversified with new shades; that into it is admitted a superior quality, which ordinary perception is no longer by itself competent to appreciate. A strange and secretive mind, Pater never explained away a touch of mystery in his life; and his adhesion to the essence of a very free form of Christianity seems to have been more than merely a matter of observance.

Thus diverted from the direct and uncompromising assertion

[1] See above, Book v, Chap. IV, sect. 6.

of self, his aestheticism was spent in tasting and intensifying the joys to be reaped from the knowledge of the past and the understanding of human souls; and in order to heighten these joys, his method was to quicken in himself and others the full consciousness of all their aspects. Pater was curiously interested in the phases of history; and chiefly in those, like the Renascence and the beginnings of Christianity, in which men's minds were driven by a powerful eagerness, or stirred by profound conflicts, which roused impassioned tumults in them. The main object of his interest is still man, even when he follows him through the picturesque surroundings where his life develops; and the measure of the artistic value of individuals is still the complexity of their character. This implies that the historian or the moralist, with him, tends to be merged in the psychologist; and the psychologist works for the benefit of the critic.

Pater as a critic is eminent. His method is that impressionism which Hazlitt and Lamb had brilliantly illustrated. His intuition, no less acute, is still more personal than theirs, in so far as it is more limited, exclusively governed by the feeling of his own powers; in so far, too, as it readily utilizes semi-conscious states, the dim regions of the inner world, and as his judgments more often are a divination of the obscure parts and of the reverse side of souls. Penetration, to that degree, has a touch of the morbid; many will deem it disquieting, it is made up of too composite a sympathy. Whatever the case may be, the 'appreciations' of Pater are re-creations, the substance of which is, we feel, drawn from himself. This subjective attitude is accentuated in the *Imaginary Portraits*, which borrow nothing from reality but germs, suggestions, or types, and which through their central method are more than half-way approximations to the novel. Pater's critical studies do not aim at completeness, nor at a cautious and unexceptionable accuracy; they seize upon moral, and thus usually subtle and hidden, elements of the individualities of writers or artists, and connect with these elements the particular modes and special accents of their art. These studies are far from accounting for everything; they do not leave the reader's mind fully satisfied, and do not always carry conviction. But few are the cases in which they do not strike us as a sort of second sight, deciphering, through a transparent medium, the subconscious impulses at the root of expressions and forms. One might point to

famous pages—such as the analysis of the Gioconda's smile—which can hardly have been written but under the sway of an illumination that is almost a mystic state.

In Pater's theoretical studies of literature, it is to the same faculty that his power can be traced. The admirable *Essay on Style* describes the anxious search for the accurate word with exceptional felicity, after the example and practice of Flaubert, and dissolves all the rules which go to the making of a w
inward
up by
deepest secret, and it is a spiritual one.

An intuitive critic, Pater has in him the soul of poetry. He is aware of it, and just as he brushes aside the superficial barrier which a mere prejudice would erect between prose and poetical effects, he clothes his judgments in the richly significant garb of the most harmonious and many-hued language. As a writer he is of the first rank, but fails to be one of the greatest, because his creative strength is im-

without hiding, a robust concatenation of ideas. This style is enriched by the powers of Romanticism; it is flexibly modelled on the delicacies of a keen, sensitive perception, and

that that of his predecessors, whether one thinks of Landor, De Quincey, or Ruskin. Pater's mastery resides in the sureness of the method with which this broader scale of artistic

ance; subtle, and yet as clear as classical concords.

Oscar Wilde [1] is the leader of the aesthetic school in the eyes

of the average reader. A disciple of Pater, he pushes his master's academic and sober doctrine to an excessive and cynical display. As a young man, he made a name for himself through the intense and refined audacity of his clothes, his tastes, his language; his gifts of satirical wit and epigram thus lent his talent a drawing-room and rather superficial character. However, the sharpness of his delineations, and his biting verve, already revealed a born writer of superior merit.

He tried his hand at several kinds of writing, without yet achieving that deeper agreement of sincerity with brilliance which shows the main strength and stable quality of a mind. His poems are elegant, charming, but do not disclose any original personality; in their impertinence, or their pathos, they strike us as unequally successful experiments in verse. His first articles or essays bear too obvious marks of his inordinate desire for paradox.

With *Intentions*, however, the serious bearing of what might have seemed a mere affectation grows manifest. In all directions, the criticism and the analysis here are singularly far-reaching. Wilde's dilettantism is transformed into a theory of the self-sufficient and autonomous value of art; his mockery into a scrutiny of the blind side of conscious beings; his irreverence into a sketch of an 'immoralist' doctrine in the manner of Nietzsche. The title of the collection is no unsafe clue to the hesitation and incompleteness which are still felt in these diverse attempts; the destructive thrusts of the thought do not converge against one object, so as to multiply their deadliness by repetition; the implied suggestions do not develop into theses. Nothing, on the other hand, can be more intelligent.

Wilde's plays are remarkably successful, and stand out through their exceptional merit against the almost unrelieved mediocrity of theatrical production for a whole century. His comedies have a rapid and brilliant animation; their dialogue shows the easy flow of the traditional French manner; the

and performed in Paris in 1894); *A Woman of No Importance*, 1894; *An Ideal Husband*, *The Importance of being Earnest*, 1895; novels: *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, 1887; *The Happy Prince, etc.*, 1888; *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, 1891; *The House of Pomegranates*, 1891. Charged with a breach of morality (1895), he spent two years in penal servitude; 1898 saw the publication of *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, and in 1900 he died in France. *De Profundis*, written in imprisonment, 1896, appeared in 1905. *Dorian Gray* is now republished in England (1928). *Poems*, two vols., 1906; *Works*, twelve vols. (incomplete). See the bibliography by Stuart Mason, 1914; studies by A. Symons (*Studies in Prose and Verse*), 1904; A. Gide, 1905; R. T. Hopkins, 1913; A. Ransome, 1913; Frank Harris, 1920; L. F. Choisy, 1927; L. Lemonnier, n.d. (*Écrivains étrangers*).

plots are cleverly wrought; the comic characters, mere sketches most of them, lay no claim to depth. The displays of wit and verbal fencing, which go beyond life, and at times overreach themselves in a sort of enthusiasm, would remind one of Congreve were it not that [illegible]

[illegible] and their weakness as well. To all appearances, their aim is only [illegible] should do full justice to [illegible] :h they raise does not ri[illegible] in the mouth; it opens the way for a bold criticism of the moral and social order, which is just adumbrated, and never finds an opportunity to develop—an opportunity which the author, indeed, seems unwilling to create. In the same way, some personages are meant to be edifying: for instance, in *Lady Windermere's Fan*, the goodness of the beings who live according to the truth of instinct is set in a favourable [illegible] onventional [illegible] dly able to [illegible] brilliance, belong to a mongrel and somewhat unnatural kind. Wilde had it in him to write problem plays, with a frankly destructive aim; confronted with the resistance and the fears of the public, he toned down his themes, thinned out the substance of his works, wound up his plots so as to please the shallow taste of the audience. *Salome*, in which the cruelty of sensual passion is studied in a realistic manner, has more unity, though its art might be more delicately shaded.

The book in which Wilde has expressed himself unreservedly is his novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. His aestheticism is to be found there in all its aspects. the search for intense or rare sensations, the ban put on every belief, every feeling, which sets a limit to the faculty of enjoyment, or enthralls the soul; the superiority of the true artist—of him whose whole life is a work of art—over the rules of society or morality. There again is to be found the nearest approach to a convincing psychological study of [illegible]

the passive clear-sightedness which belongs to some mental states, given to his own thesis its antidote, by depicting the inner ruin brought about by the stubborn quest of pleasure.

ness which may cling to naturalism, all the boldness or perversity of symbolism and aestheticism, converge to support the confessed and indeed complacent feeling of a decadence. After so many positive achievements, man as a creature of desire no longer deems it possible to add a new zest to his efforts, but by giving up all thought of further progress; he accepts as a law the gradual dissolution of his energy. The France of Verlaine and Rimbaud then furnishes this frame of mind with models and formulae. The greater number of the

psychological order. It is the outbreak of the instincts which had been repressed by the constraint of the Victorian period. The social and moral discipline of an age which had been stirred by many ferments, but had remained unanimous in its exterior faith; the rebelliou in every directior trainedly. The need of frank or cynical truth, just like that of ethereal or morbid fancy; the paradoxes of aggressive personality, and at the same time the extolling of foreign examples, an

pt as an attribute in the popular memory.

Being thus vague and diffused, English decadentism has no erary programme. In it the most various literary intentions

with the bitterness and fever of their inspiration, not to confirm its sincerity, and not to throw light upon it.[1]

4. *The Celtic Revival.*—Inner affinities of more than one kind connect the new Romanticism with the Celtic revival. Ireland is the centre of the latter movement; and its leaders in Ireland have been, on the whole, writers instinct with a lyrical and mystic idealism. They share, moreover, through the

which the compo-
de up; symbolism
nt influences, con-

tribute to their development. But the outstanding point is that the first seed from which the Celtic renascence grew was sown by European Romanticism from 1790 to 1848. This powerful stimulation of consciousness, and of the deeper collective instincts, brought about a general revival of the feelings of nationality or race. The nineteenth century is seething with the ferment of political decomposition and reorganization, which has been inoculated into the system of the old world by the active force of blood or soul kinship, between human groups which the chances of history had drawn apart. *Thus stimulated, national feeling has since* dominated over the psychology of peoples, and still does so at the present day. As soon, therefore, as the neo-Romanticism

English culture or against it

What is thus awaking and asserting itself, is rather a temperament than the figure of a genuine ethnical unit. Scotland, Ireland, and even Wales, though to a lesser degree, *are the complex products of the mingling of several races.* The Celtic spirit is an abstraction; it stands for an ideal, the full portrait towards which those features tend which in the long run will shape themselves out, from what a human group is, and chiefly from what it wants to be. In the present instance, the human group is not only mixed, it is scattered. Nothing can be more certain than the fecundity of the Celtic infusion in the literature and life of Great Britain; nothing, on the other hand, can be more hazardous than the theories

which profess to gauge and value the contribution of Celticism in the total product. Many of the qualities which are most readily attributed to it have undoubtedly existed, to a pronounced degree, in manifest Anglo-Saxons. Whatever the case may be, there is an Irish psychological personality; it is not without some resemblance to the indigenous aspects of the Welsh individuality; and in the Highland Scots analogous characteristics have been pointed out. The linguistic kinship of the dialects emphasizes this vague family consciousness, and supplies it, indeed, with its most substantial element, in spite of the age-long retreat of the Celtic languages, in Great Britain, before the advance of English. Outside the national frontiers, the Bretons of French Brittany are admitted to a place in the ideal unity which tends to revive; and even France, on account of her 'Gaulish' descent, is considered by some as part of it.

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the writers of Irish birth are merged without any resistance in the current of English literature; the attraction of a more widespread language and a more developed culture rather easily destroys with them the consciousness of their separate nationality. Even those upon whom the stamp of their origin remains most clearly printed—such as Sheridan or Goldsmith—soften down these features and adapt them to the taste of their English readers. In Scotland, where the flame of intellectual zeal never ceased to burn bright, the spirit of a distinct nationhood among men of letters keeps stronger; Smollett in London does not forget his smaller fatherland; from Allan Ramsay to Burns, the poets of the soil react against the literary centralization then in the making. Burns writes his masterpieces in dialect; Scott quickens the knowledge and love of the national past; the feeling of history is stimulated by Romanticism; and already from that time the revival of all the elements of artistic individuality lying in the kingdoms, the provinces, and districts which go to make up the impersonal unity of Great Britain, is being gradually prepared. The political movement aiming at general self-government and federal organization, of which the grant of autonomy to Ireland is the most recent stage, is later than that rebirth of the feeling of a separate identity, and is derived from it.

The renascence of Celticism in English literature coincides with the acuter stage of the Home Rule agitation, without being identified with it. By far the greater number of the

persons who take an active share in the Celtic movement are

of a complete spiritual enfranchisement, as imagined or demanded by the out-and-out apostles of Irish political freedom.

out Ulster), more homogeneous than that of Scotland, make her the historical centre of those various claims. Along with

has preserved, amid flashes of clear-sightedness and moods of matter-of-fact realism—both promote a partly illusory synthesis, according to which the Celtic mind is all made up of melancholy emotion and mysticism. The disquisitions of Matthew Arnold, like those of Renan in France, are at the very root of this simplified notion. Thus, when the 'Celtic revival' becomes an actual movement of thought and letters,

and the decadents, a keen intellectuality dominated over the impulses of passion or the senses; pathos itself assumed an artificial look; emotions of the head rather than of the heart adapted themselves readily to a scrupulous elaboration of form, and to the lessons of French technique. On the contrary, with the Celtic revivalists, intelligence once more

tion of her moral originality. Among novelists, a Carleton,[1] a Lover,[2] a Lever,[3] as well as a Miss Edgeworth, plead for a neglected personality, translate it into another language, interpret it, rather than they express it. Poets, on the other hand, following the lead of Thomas Moore, succeed less imperfectly in catching that subtle essence, the soul of a nation. Such singers as Mangan[4] and Allingham[5] are better attuned to the note which the emancipated sons of a free Ireland nowadays require.

It was between 1885 and 1895 that the movement began as an active and organized crusade. From London, where the first groups were formed, it spread to Dublin. Its leaders—Gavan Duffy, Douglas Hyde, Stopford Brooke—formulated a programme. The culture of Ireland was to be founded on a systematic endeavour to realize intellectual freedom. It was to renew its vigour by being refreshed from the fountain-heads of its originality: Ireland's old texts, legends, tales, poems, which, once translated, were to be developed so as to supply the invention of writers with themes and their imagination with visions. Meanwhile a mean was being found between English, a foreign tongue, and Gaelic, the national language, which was lifeless and read only by a few: Douglas Hyde unwittingly achieved a compromise by combining a groundwork of English vocabulary with a number of turns, phrases, dialectal words, in which the influence of Irish syntax and Irish ways of thinking was directly felt. The efforts of this group drew to it young men of talent; literary or dramatic associations, and a national theatre, were successively created.[6]

Through its political and social aspect, which is of the highest interest, this movement is connected with the influences that have brought about the grant of independence to Ireland. It is not possible yet to form an impression as to what the literary life of the enfranchised nation may be; to

[1] William Carleton (1794–1869): *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, 1830–3, etc.

[2] Samuel Lover (1797–1868): *Rory O'More*, 1837; *Handy Andy*, 1842, etc.

[3] Charles Lever (1806–72): *Harry Lorrequer*, 1839; *Charles O'Malley*, 1841, etc.

[4] James Clarence Mangan (1803–49).

[5] William Allingham (1824–89): *Poems*, 1850.

[6] The *Love Songs of Connacht* (1893), of Hyde, are a first example of Anglo-Irish literature. The Irish National Literary Society was founded in 1892 in Dublin; the Irish National Theatre Society in 1903; the Abbey Theatre was opened in 1904.

foresee the ratio in which the British elements will be united with the purely native strains. In the eyes of the historian of literature, the course of the Celtic revival before 1914 is summed up in the study of the personalities who joined it, bringing with them, along with their talents, tendencies of a different nature, and sometimes singularly at variance among themselves.

With Yeats,[1] the affinities of temperament have been at [illegible]

[illegible] and spare images upon this thin grey background, in the style of a Japanese print. A laboured and occasionally obscure reflection, with its intentions and studied effects, has since [illegible] those [illegible] most [illegible] all

[1] William Butler Yeats (1865–1939), born in Dublin of Protestant family, imbibed the influences of his native land before coming into touch with those of [illegible]

the modern science of the inexpressible (*The Wanderings of Oisin*), and in the ethereal grace of his early poems.

It is no less definitely the lyricism of imagination that gives life to his dramas. Their value does not lie in the action or the characters. Beauty here arises from a tender or tragic symbolism, through which are dimly seen the features of sentiment and of reverie, or those of heroism and suffering, which mingle in the moral figure of Ireland. *The Land of Heart's Desire*, a little masterpiece, in which the wistful aspiration for the beyond, the eternal restlessness of unsatisfied hearts, are crystallized in a pure allegory; and *Cathleen ni Hoolihan*, in which the symbol rises to the breadth and poignant force of a patriotic emotion, are the highest achievements of this series of plays.

A conscious and truth-loving mind, Yeats is a penetrating analyst. He looses the complexes of temperaments and the complexities of values through the suppleness of his intuitions; he disentangles and classifies their shades by means of his lucid intelligence. He remains the poet in his judgments, and one whole side of his nature makes him akin to the school of critics moulded by the influence of the Elizabethans. His varied work will probably live, if enfranchised Ireland should give birth to an original literature, as a distinguished blending of the national spirit with British and European culture; as a transition between the literary ideal of yesterday, and that of to-morrow, which bids fair to be more strongly individualized.

It is to the same fusion that the plays of Synge[1] owe their very intense character. In the present case the blending is bolder, so much so that a paradox seems to lurk in it; but as a compensation the result is more highly flavoured. The artistic sensibility of Synge obeys very different impulses. He too perceives the poetry of wonder, of which Irish imagination is so fond; he loves the sudden flights in which the spirited words of a tramp will soar to the highest utterance; he feels

[1] John Millington Synge, born in 1871, of Anglo-Irish stock, studied at Trinity College, Dublin, sojourned in France, travelled in Italy and in Germany; on the advice of Yeats, he went in quest of primitive life and a virgin language to the Aran Islands, to the west of Ireland; wrote dramas: *In the Shadow of the Glen* (staged in 1903, published in 1905); *Riders of the Sea* (staged in 1904, published in 1905); *The Well of the Saints*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *The Tinker's Wedding*, 1907; he published a descriptive study, *The Aran Islands*, 1907; *Poems and Translations*, 1909; and died in the latter year, leaving a drama, *Deirdre of the Sorrows*, 1910; *The Works of J. M. Synge* (revised collected ed., 1932, etc.). See F. Bickley, *J. M. Synge and the Irish Dramatic Movement*, 1912; P. P. Howe, *J. M. Synge, a Critical Study*, 1912; M. Bourgeois, *J. M. Synge and the Irish Theatre*, 1913; D. Corkery, *Synge and Anglo-Irish Literature*, 1931.

the thrill of the rugged glens of a wild land, the barbarous superstitions of its most backward nooks, the dramas which the sea enacts round its shores. But it is as a realist that he sees the mixture of epic and farce of which Irish life is often made; he exalts both tragedy and poetry to their greatest intensity at supreme moments, and on the other hand finds a broad, familiar, almost vulgar vein of comedy in the texture of daily experience. His studies of manners are thus pitched in the key of humour, for which Yeats made allowance less liberally. And the continental school of art, whose spell he feels and whose method he puts into practice, is that of naturalism. In Paris he has breathed the atmosphere of irony, of powerfully condensed style, of absolute submission to a trivial and disconcerting object, of philosophical and scientific bitterness, in which the *fin-de-siècle* literature is bathed.

The Shadow of the Glen.

The merry, irreverent Ireland of *The Tinker's Wedding*, of *The Well of the Saints*, the naïvely and poetically unmoral Ireland of *The Playboy*, has thus inspired him no less, or even more, than that of the funeral lament, in which a peasant

cussion in his own country. Its note, indeed, jars surprisingly with the purpose of national idealization which lives at the core of the Celtic revival. In the eyes of a foreign observer, this work deserves the credit of depicting aspects at least of Ireland with a vigorous, broad touch. The technique of

most valuable literary asset.

Besides Synge and Yeats, a less rapid survey should dwell at

some length upon almost equally significant talents, like those of G. W. Russell,[1] whose serious poetry is instinct with a glowing pantheism; of Lionel Johnson,[2] who died prematurely, after writing delicately inspired verse and brilliant critical essays; of Lady Gregory,[3] one of the leaders of the Irish national theatre, the author of plays finely poised between comedy and farce; of Edward Martyn,[4] Padraic Colum,[5] James Stephens,[6] Katharine Tynan,[7] etc. The young Anglo-Irish literature has a wealth of original writers; but none of them seems so far to equal the masters of the previous generation. The fulfilled dream of national self-government sets this school a still unsolved problem, as to the choice it now has to make between the tradition of compromise, and the possibilities of cultural independence.[8]

The ironical and detached personality of George Moore[9] evades this dilemma. Through his origins, and at least one phase of his career, he belongs to the Celtic revival; through his individualism, and his versatility, he belongs only to himself. He was, however, intimately connected with this move-

[1] George W. Russell, known by the pseudonym of 'A. E.'; 1867–1935, a poet, painter, critic, and economist, one of the noblest figures in the Irish intellectual movement. His poems comprise: *Homeward*, 1894; *By Still Waters*, 1906; *Deirdre*, 1907; *The House of the Titans*, 1934, etc. *Collected Poems*, 1913. See John Eglinton, *A Memoir of A. E.*, 1935.

[2] 1867–1902. *Poetical Works*, new ed., 1926; *Reviews and Critical Papers*, 1921; *The Art of Thomas Hardy*, 1894, new ed., 1923; *Poetical Works*, new ed., 1936; *Reviews and Critical Papers*, 1921. See A. W. Patrick, *Lionel Johnson, poète et critique*, 1939.

[3] Augusta, Lady Gregory (1852–1932), popularized the folklore of Ireland, and wrote for the Abbey Theatre. *Gods and Fighting Men*, 1904; *Seven Short Plays*, 1909; *Irish Folk-History Plays*, 1911; *New Comedies*, 1913, etc.

[4] 1859–1923. *The Heather Field*, 1899; *The Dream Physician*, 1918, etc.

[5] Born in 1881; poet and dramatist; linked up the Celtic renascence with the movement for Irish independence.

[6] Born in 1882; poet and novelist. *Insurrections*, 1909; *The Crock of Gold*, 1912; *The Hill of Vision*, 1912; *Green Branches*, 1912; *Collected Poems*, 1936, etc.

[7] 1861–1931. Poet, novelist, critic. *Irish Love Songs*, 1892; *Poems*, 1911, etc.

[8] An interesting figure is that of Forrest Reid (1876–1947), a novelist: *Apostate*, 1926; *Brian Westby*, 1934; *Uncle Stephen*, 1931, etc.

[9] George Moore (1852–1933), born in Ireland, was the son of a member of Parliament; educated privately, he had no material cares and devoted himself to literature. He resided for a considerable time in Paris, and under French influences formed his notion of art; wrote verse: *Flowers of Passion*, 1877; *Pagan Poems*, 1881; novels or short stories: *A Modern Lover*, 1883; *A Mummer's Wife*, 1884; *A Drama in Muslin*, 1886; *A Mere Accident*, 1887; *Mike Fletcher*, 1889; *Esther Waters*, 1894; *Sister Teresa*, 1901; *The Lake*, 1905; *Aphrodite in Aulis*, 1930, etc.; works of literary or aesthetic criticism: *Impressions and Opinions*, 1890; *Modern Paintings*, 1893; a religious novel: *The Brook Kerith*, 1916; an historical novel: *Héloïse and Abélard*, 1921; plays: *The Bending of the Bough*, 1900; *The Coming of Gabrielle*, 1921; an autobiography in four main volumes: *Confessions of a Young Man*, 1888; *Hail and Farewell: Ave*, 1911, *Salve*, 1912, *Vale*, 1914; *Avowals*, 1924; *Memoirs of my Dead Life*, 1928, etc. See Humbert Wolfe, *George Moore*, 1933; J. M. Hone, *Life of George Moore*, 1936.

of his nature. One should not set too much store by the

that naturalism did answer to one of the deeper needs of his *being, to that desire for a challenging frankness which his* work has never ceased to reveal In symbolism, again, another side of his mind found satisfaction George Moore reconciles the audacity of crude, brutal observation with the sensuous refinement of a voluptuous aesthete, the search for artistic emotions is with him a kind of idealism; and the keen interest which he takes in spiritual anguish, and which made its influence ever obscurely felt, has become in the long run one of his main motives The author of *Flowers of Passion* and *Mike Fletcher* is also the author of *The Brook Kerith*

line which the demand for experimental truth followed, when it was deflected towards the quest for symbolical and refined

precise religious yearnings of the twentieth century. At every stage of this changeful career the care of form remains an element of conscientiousness and continuity. Neither the poet, nor the novelist, nor in the definite sense of the word the critic, is among the foremost writers of his kind. The man who stands behind them and makes them one is a figure of

5. *Francis Thompson.*—Francis Thompson[1] deserves to be studied apart. His talent shows extreme complexity. He belongs to his own time through the mysticism of his inspiration, and the symbolism of his vision. Moreover, as had been the case with the Romanticists of the early nineteenth century, the preferences of his taste return to the ardour and the freedom of the Elizabethans; but in him the desire for subtlety tends to outdo that for exuberance; and it is to the 'metaphysical' poets of the seventeenth century that he chooses to give his homage. Lastly, he keeps, and pushes even farther, that search for a style enriched with elaborate ornament, which Keats illustrated pre-eminently, and by which the age which immediately preceded Thompson's had no less liked to soothe the classicism of its instincts. He thus appears as an original, but somewhat unstable and artificial, synthesis of manifold literary lines of descent; he unites the memory of Milton with that of Crashaw, the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites with that of Coventry Patmore. A temperament endowed with personal gifts saves him from unduly passive imitation.

The focus of his moral being is faith—he is a Roman Catholic, like the two poets whom he most deeply admires, Coventry Patmore and Crashaw. From this belief he draws the feeling of the divine in nature and man, and an earnest and delicate spirituality. His thought owes it no less the craving, an ever-unsatisfied one, for the intellectual formulae in which reason, before its final abdication, attempts to grasp and solve the riddle of things. As his imagination and his ear, on the other hand, are fond of the polysyllabic sonorousness of rare compound words, and of the cadence of an ecclesiastical vocabulary, his highly wrought language has the golden radiance of a missal, and is not free from some scholastic affectation. At the opposite end of his range he has moments of rapt simplicity, in which there is still heard an ecstatic and poignant note, which would reach the level of the highest art, were it not that the inner strain is betrayed by sudden breaks, cocasional falls into spurious pathos or prosaism.

[1] Francis Thompson, born in 1859, the son of a doctor, studied medicine, which he abandoned for literature; experienced great hardship in London; was taken under the protection of Mr. and Mrs. Meynell, and published a volume of verse: *Poems*, 1893; then *Sister Songs*, 1895; *New Poems*, 1897. He died in 1907. An essay on Shelley appeared in 1908. *Collected Poetry*, 1913; *Poems*, 1937; *Works*, 3 vols., 1923. See J. K. Rooker, *Francis Thompson*, 1913; F. Delattre, *De Byron à Francis Thompson*, 1913; Everard Meynell, *Life of Francis Thompson*, 1926; R. L. Mégroz, *Francis Thompson*, 1927; T. H. Wright, *Francis Thompson and his Poetry*, 1937.

talent linked to suffering, Thompson has written, amidst pains of a grievous life, some masterpieces filled with a ngely sumptuous and ample harmony, in which amplitude sumptuousness are not always reconciled, and in which try at times is the loser for their secret struggle. The ants of their union possess a supreme beauty, which re-ids one of Keats; but even more beautiful are those in ch breadth of inspiration predominates, and enforces its y. *The Hound of Heaven* has a majesty, a fullness of

ːn striking felicities, of imaginative impressionism.[1]

---

he Mind and Poetry of ... *Hopkins*, 1935, ... *rard Manley Hopkins*, 1944

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINES OF ACTION

g *Purposes.*—The end of the nineteenth century ng of the twentieth make up a single literary ıeans that the relative unity of some precteristics makes itself felt. But the unity of s in a unifying background of disquietude. :endencies with which it is stirred, after the the Victorian equilibrium, lay at its core a ness through their divergence.

surveyed, however, in a wider perspective, its is simplified into some sort of progression. nological limits thus laid down, a movement ›assing from one century to another actually unge in thought. After 1900 the doctrines of emselves; they attempt, each to its own ad-:reate the harmony of minds. The criticism n brought to bear on intellectualism had restige, without setting up anything in its Romanticism had freed imagination, desire, ı all restraining rule, and had followed them urous ways. Before its course is run it re-›ugh a last extension of its principle. The twentieth century sees simple straight lines of tion, traced by the driving power of the will, s out more clearly over the confused back-›d at the same time Romantic and intellectual. tion of the will is a revulsion of the vital in-n against the deliquescence in which the nine-had ended. This bracing up of moral energy, ed and proclaimed by its apostles, coincides in ith a very definite hardening of the national outh African war, its first reverses, its un-strain it calls for, the direct and primitive ses, give the signal which a whole people has with uneasiness, frightened already or shocked etermination to live. The morbid elements of ssimism, and decadentism are denounced and

condemned; henceforth they hide themselves, and both society and literature are encouraged *to feel free from a passing taint.* It might seem as if the South African war, an accidental circumstance, had not been the deeper cause of events. An identical need in other countries—for example in France— [illegible]

decessor had vainly worried. [illegible]

putting an end to it.

These doctrines, at least in a certain sense, are of very similar nature; one outstanding psychological trait makes them alike. Each of them, aiming at social salvation by *means of a strict convergence forced upon men's minds and* hearts, demands a rallying of all purposes, and more or less imperiously points out the road that leads to it. Thus, in so far as their central endeavour is concerned, they all react against the disconnected aims of a period destitute of moral unity. They prepare the way for the desire of convergence which seems to be once more a trait of the period we are now entering; and f [illegible]
from certain sympto [illegible]
the means of a new [illegible]
[illegible] former classical phases.

[1] personality is
of a current of

[illegible] Henley (1849-1903), born at Gloucester, led the life of an [illegible]

instinctive thought which has never ceased to flow obscurely through the life and literature of England since the sixteenth century; a current which had hardly ever before made itself plainly recognizable through direct expression, but which entered, mingled with other elements, into the doctrines or feelings of many thinkers. In the nineteenth century, Carlyle and Kingsley had most clearly revealed its presence and influence. Henley is a spiritual heir to both; but he is chiefly a contemporary of Kipling. His existence prevents the inspiration of *The Seven Seas* from standing out as an exception in its time, and connects it with a more normal background of sentiment.

He has the temperament of imperialism. It is only in some parts of his poems that he celebrates and worships the Empire; but the magnetism of its presence is always upon him; he carries within himself the emotions and desires whose united influence is even then stimulating the imperial religion, and imparting to it the fresh contagious power of a new-born faith. Henley's moral being finds its central unity in an intense reaction against the unhealthy subtlety of an over-refined civilization; he knows intuitively the peril created by the weakening of national energy; he already possesses, and he discovers in himself, a remedy for this evil in the elementary and primitive virtue of effort. Being incapable of intellectual complexity, he protests against the corrupt search for the unfelt, through which the vitality of the race is running out. While his own body is disabled, he has that impassioned love of strength which many invalids feed on the purely internal exercise of the will. Probing below the culture of centuries he reaches and brings back to daylight the ancient store of ancestral instincts. Beyond the spirit of the Elizabethan sea-dogs, it is that of the Anglo-Saxon pirates he seems at times to revive, so distinctly heathenish is with him the enthusiasm of fighting.

His rough lines have energy, a robust hold on reality. Their worth lies in the poetical transfiguring of the concrete, produced, not by imagination or by the spiritual sweetness which dissolves the hard, cruel facts of life, but by an original idealizing process, with simple, sober devices. Whether the themes are the experiences of a patient in a hospital, or sights and scenes in the roaring turmoil of London, his method is a realism which the evocative power and the dense, suggestive vigour of the phrasing raise to sudden heights. These soarings reveal an artist, whose range includes the audacity and the

achievements of the most modern style of writing; his personal touch is the note of defiance, the abruptness of a man who, even while he spreads these felicities over his page, pretends not to condescend to the labour of form. Again, Henley is gifted with a sense of rhythm, knows how to handle the technique of his art, even practises it at times with some artificial fondness, in pieces where the national poet that he is allows himself to be tempted by the nimbleness of French metrical combinations; but he neither [illegible]

[illegible] adventure, and the sacred battles of the Anglo-Saxon race: it is also [illegible]

[illegible] talents. He was imitated, and exerted an influence.

However great the art of Kipling [1] may be, it is not looked

[1] Rudyard Kipling, born in [illegible] Wesleyan [illegible]

at in a wrong perspective if the writer is replaced in a movement of the national consciousness, which he has chosen to serve. No less than to the history of literary forms, he belongs to that of the mind of a people. No one has done more to give permanence to the imperialist feeling in the making, by means of pregnant words, and of moving or stirring images and rhythms. It was in the years just before and after the South African war that there was widely diffused through Great Britain the political, moral, and concrete notion of the Empire, a vast and varied commonwealth of lands and societies, linked to one centre by ties of origin, of interest and instinct. While statesmen grasped the possibilities included in a fact which their conscious will had never contributed to create, and were anxious to strengthen and develop it; while scientists explored it, studied its resources, or told its progress, it was given to a man of letters to make it supremely and most deeply actual by implanting it among the familiar and intimate ideas of all men. It is from Kipling that to the majority of Englishmen the existence of the Empire dates. Again, he had been most efficient in imparting to the scattered nations, born of a common mother, the active realization of their human relationship both to her and to one another. His words have inwoven, perhaps, the strongest threads with the warp and woof of Empire.

The writer who has thus incorporated himself with the moral destiny of the British race seemed hardly marked out, by his birth, to express and actualize its most central will. Born in India, he felt exotic influences before he trod the soil of England; his mental formation was mixed, and exceptional. He knew the so rigid frame of purely English society and manners only from the outside, before he could joyfully and proudly fit himself in. But there is no mystery about the whole process. Kipling's parents were both English, and of the Wesleyan denomination; they were thus directly connected with spiritual strains which are among the most average and typical in Great Britain. The skies of India, the hot, wild breath of the jungle, quickened in the boy's nerves a power of vivid sensation which is a constant trait of the Anglo-Saxon. The originality which he drew from the uprooting of his family thus intensified in him the temperament of his race, without altering it. This more acute perception, turning to self-analysis, threw light through the feeling of a personal difference, upon the general and per-

anent background of common tendencies." As will be the se with the beings to whom initiation into the soul of a oup comes late and consciously—people from overseas and turalized citizens of all kinds—the mixed experience of [illegible] d not obscure, the

[illegible] writings from the [illegible] s gradually more [illegible] ritish rule in India shown at work temper their discreet panegyric with many *uches of free irony. The simple heroism of the officer on the* fghan frontier, of the civil servant in famine time, of the gineer facing a flood, progressively turns into a privileged otive; the love of adventure glorifies all the pioneers and e reckless sons of the race; over lands and oceans, from the lar ice to the deserts of the torrid zone, the brotherhood silent, stubborn effort appears. The characters of soldiers hom Kipling creates, and fills with a richly picturesque inviduality, contribute to break down the barrier of ignorice which divided the professional army from the civilian pulation. From the *Barrack Room Ballads* to *The Seven ras* the progression is plain; in the latter, the destiny of the iosen people, called by Providence to explore, to exploit, and watch over the seas, and through them the continents, is e main inspiration of the series. Before the war in South frica, Kipling has already discovered his patriotic vocation; had become the prophet of the imperial ideal. *The Five ations*, written after the war and its trials, proclaims the spel of unity, such as it is and must be.

The doctrine is first founded upon facts—those facts which arlyle has already invested with an incomparable majesty [illegible]

ge feels entitled to draw from a diffused evolutionism The ist of the British race illustrates its robust hold on reality, s expansion is a proof of its superiority in the struggle. To ctol the solidarity which unites its scattered branches is to icrease its sense of vigour, and thus its vigour itself; it is to ontribute to the fulfilment of fate. The conquering people

shades, except to express humorous intentions,
ccasions, a mood of poetical serenity; his special
he vast domain of Germanic words, which are still

ords, military and naval slang, terms borrowed
dialects of the Empire. The joy he feels in rare,
e odours and the hues
s ever an essential ele-
brings him to write;
activity is extremely
Therefore, neglecting or scorning the play of
towards the material universe,
and human souls in their
ther in co-operation or in

story is the fittest frame for an art of intensity
ong effects are led to condensation of form by their
Kipling has shown an instinctive sense of this
l. Stages can be pointed out in his apprentice-
om the first attempt he is in this field a master.
of the cultured circles of India, and that
breathed, the spell
ound its way; the
rivals had created
which did not leave
development, came
f. He moves at ease in the limits of the short

ureness to the same strength of unfailing mental
e conciseness of the style is made of the expressive
ch single word. The movement with which the
impelled strikes us as being that of direct ex-
e successive phases in the story develop one from
h the pressing necessity of the moments when life,
ior power, forces itself upon us. These numberless

episodes are governed by a fate which is the subconscious judgment of the artist; it is often dramatic, at times ironical or indulgent, but always imperious.

The subjects thus treated make up altogether a vast picture of the world, or of the several provinces which the writer singles out according to the preferences of his tastes, of his more familiar acquaintance. Kipling's short stories organize themselves readily into cycles. There is that of India, with the life of the English in the foreground, and occasional glimpses into the strange, picturesque, disquieting underworld of native manners; that of the army and colonial campaigns; that of the navy or the merchant fleet; that of travel and exoticism; that of steam and machines; that of realism, with some inlets of social study; that of the supernatural and the marvellous; that of the animal universe and the jungle. Each of them has its special surroundings, described with broad evocative touches. Wrought up and developed landscapes are rare with Kipling; but so efficient is the power of his vision and of his language that he fills us with the constant presence of nature, felt in all the moods of the earth, the sky, and the waters; and bathes all our senses in her irresistible radiance. Accentuated states, violent effects, are sought by him rather than notes of sweetness and grace. It is only in the latest phase of his career that he seems to have evinced, when treating English subjects, a new fondness for the half-tones and sober accents of a country with an old, humanized charm. Whatever he may purpose to describe, each one of his words calls up more shapes, and invests them with richer sensitive appeals, than those of any English writer before him.

In those descriptions, and in the life lent to unhuman things, from the jungle and the wind to the engine of a steamer—discerned in their essence with an extraordinary intuition, animated in a manner comparable to that of Shelley's poetry, but with an existence less uniformly thrilling, more distinct, colder, and, so to say, more objective—lies the outstanding quality of this picture of the world. The effects of strangeness, of anguish, even of mystery, are also one of the fruitful resources of Kipling's art; they superadd to the dramatic intensity of experience, and to the overwhelming grandeur of the universe, a something which belongs to a higher order, a more subtle element, a kind of poetry. This impassioned lover of nature is alive to the supernatural; and his positive

mind is no less mystic, as is revealed, for example, by that poem of the secret and obstinate worship of an intangible ideal, *To the New Romance.* On the contrary, the properly human aspects of his tales move us less vividly.

The reason is not that he fails to draw characters that our sense of reality can accept. It would be a hasty and un-

breadth of range in the picture of a very complex and very special world, which by itself justifies it. They both give ample scope to psychology; and the personages on whom the light is focused are outlined with a remarkable, though simplified, clearness. On the whole, however, Kipling does not burrow very deep into the souls of men, nor does he care to do so. Human beings are to him summed up in a few significant features, which exhaust the substance of a personality because they reveal, at one stroke, all that it is material we should know, to our sense of action or of the picturesque. Minute and gratuitous analyses are not to his taste; he feels that they are injurious to the health of the inner life, and to that of art. Only the speaking traits of faces, and the

n. The

an un-

ns psy-

greatest

he very

nature of the characters admits of, and indeed demands, simplicity—varieties of the soldier type, fully individualized and highly flavoured, but of rather rudimentary intelligence: schoolboys and growing young men; before all, those wonderful sketches of animals, each having its natural shape, and at the same time a moral personality fitted to this shape with astonishing sureness. In many respects the *Jungle Books* are, if not Kipling's masterpiece, at least his most representative work.

With no writer are the prosaist and the poet more closely connected, or do they show a more indissoluble unity. The matter, and the inspiration, are with both the same; Kipling's poetry hardly intensifies the density of a prose already so energetic and solid. Rhythm only adds to it a musical element, in which tones of vigour exclusively predominate, and

n, rather primitive as its artistic quality may be, still
uces the desired effects with an often absolute felicity.
e effects belong mostly to the sphere of concrete sugges-
imitative harmony, the joy of physical exertion, and
our; at times, to that of mysteriousness and dream.
ough alliteration does not play any regular prosodic part
e verse of Kipling, it is so frequent, and so efficacious, that
trays an instinctive affinity of the metre with the Anglo-
n line. This poetry is thus altogether rough and popular;
yle and lilt remind the reader of the old English ballads;
ts tone, its themes, its language, clashed so abruptly and
gly with the elegant refinement of the followers of Pre-
aelitism and of Tennyson, that to many its success came
shock; but its hold upon a broader public was immediate
vill be lasting.
r into their brutality, cynicism, or prosaic vulgarity, those
is infuse the flavoured or intoxicating essence of a vision
ings which lacks neither grandeur, nor heroism, nor
ty. The *Barrack Room Ballads*, though very unequal,
approach a perfect fullness of expression through the
intapped resources of slang or of the most naïve language;
in *The Seven Seas*, *The Five Nations*, the outlook grows
r; here it is actually the annals and glories of the Empire
are sung; and if these hymns savour in no way of official
o, their dignity is made up of the oldest as well as the most
g claims; the words which they use are at the same time
of the English Bible and of the crowd of workers—
ists, soldiers, sailors, civil engineers, engine drivers—who
created the strength of the Empire. In spite of all,
ing's poetry has a democratic ring, and in some respects
sembles that of Whitman. He has written no more
orate study of a soul than *MacAndrew's Hymn*; and the
breadth of many pieces, such as *The Rhyme of the Three
rs*, is surpassed by nothing in modern English literature.
iere is still another Kipling, that of subdued tales, in which
supernatural strain is nearer to tradition; and where the
and fairies of Shakespearian folklore revive; whose in-
tion is not only imperial, but precisely English; and
e in the idyllic scenery of Sussex the succession of ages
an ancient land is called up by a smilingly fanciful
gination. Nationalism here is gilded with an evening
n, which spreads a serene peace over its haughty brow;
seems to feel, along with a melancholy note, a new tolera-

tion, and almost an intellectual relativism. In this light drew to its close the career of a vigorous writer who reached the heights of artistic achievement too early to maintain himself at his own level. *Puck of Pook's Hill*, *Rewards and Fairies* are charming works; a lesser talent might build its reputation upon them; but they no longer bear the stamp of genius [1]

3. *Traditionalism: Chesterton, etc.*—The unrest felt by minds which science and reason left confronted with an impassive universe, becomes, with the advent of the twentieth century, a more active moral force, because it feels itself in more secure sympathy with a movement of opinion. Instead of seeking an outlet in dreams, philosophy, or pessimism, energetic temperaments, instinctively in tune with life or swayed by the need of faith, are thus led to put forth an aggressive justification of their demands. They denounce the present, its materialism, its uncertainties; they seek their truth, the peace of the soul, a stable order, in the traditions of the past.

[illegible]

supported, fifty years earlier, the movement of idealistic protest whose leaders were Carlyle and Ruskin. Like causes produce like effects; and round Chesterton may be grouped writers with whom the longing for a more authoritative, more humane, or more picturesque society recalls, at times unconsciously, the eloquent regrets of the prophets of the previous age.

In the field of practice their desires do not necessarily assume a concrete aspect; they remain often vague, it is in [illegible] They swell and

[illegible]

in the literature and thought of the present-day world. Conservative traditionalism, the enemy in principle of pure reason, and in tendency opposed to almost all the changes effected or demanded on the strength of rational programmes, does not to-day occupy so important a place in English letters

[1] By virtue of their patriotic inspiration and central theme, the sea, the poems of Sir Henry Newbolt (1862–1938), poet and critic, rank next to those of Kipling. *Collected Poems, 1897–1907*, 1918; *Drake's Drum, and other Songs*

as it does in France; moreover, it is on an average less strictly negative. But the writers who, with Chesterton, bring an indictment against reason, are, in fact, antagonistic, on almost every point, to the radical theses of a Shaw and a Wells. Their influence, strengthened by the philosophical fortune of pragmatism, tends to dispossess the principle of free intellectual inquiry of the control which it had apparently arrogated to itself over both mental and civic life. They may call themselves democrats, and even reformers; but their programme goes to fortify the established order. They may believe themselves independent of religious dogmas; but the effort of their faith harmonizes with the teaching of the churches; and a deep affinity directs them towards the Roman Catholic idea. They stand in a natural league with the forces of authority round which, before and chiefly since the shock of the War, the instinctive desires for resistance and stability have been gathering.

These forces in Great Britain are less bent than in France upon finding a justification for themselves in theory; they are rooted in habits, interests, corporations, government, and this guarantee is to them sufficient. To their still undiminished strength, the number of writers or artists who invest their prestige with logical cogency, with attractiveness or with poetry, bears no adequate proportion. On the whole, English literature and art at the present time are instinct with a spirit of moral independence and social criticism; the free search for new values is with them in the ascendant; and the apostles of traditionalism are neither the most numerous nor the most eminent group.

G. K. Chesterton [1] is the champion of orthodoxy. To this word he has given a more and more substantial meaning; the logic of his thought led him to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church, to which he was drawn by both inclination and conviction. An optimist, a lover of life, he derides

[1] Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874–1936), born in London, studied at the Slade School of Art; began as an art critic and contributed to reviews; published studies on *Browning*, 1903; *Dickens*, 1906; *G. B. Shaw*, 1909; *The Victorian Age in Literature*, 1913; novels: *The Napoleon of Notting Hill*, 1904; *The Man who was Thursday*, 1908; *The Ball and the Cross*, 1910; *Manalive*, 1912; *The Flying Inn*, 1914; critical and philosophical works: *Heretics*, 1905; *Orthodoxy*, 1908; *What's Wrong with the World?* 1910; short stories: *The Innocence of Father Brown*, 1911, etc.; *The Crimes of England*, 1915; *The Uses of Diversity*, 1920; *Collected Poems*, 1933; *Autobiography*, 1936, etc. See J. West, *G. K. Chesterton, a Critical Study*, 1916; P. Braybrooke, *G. K. Chesterton*, 1922, etc., G. Bullett, *The Innocence of G. K. Chesterton*, 1923; W. R. Titterton, *G. K. Chesterton*, 1936; D. de Pauw, *G. K. Chesterton, 1874–1936*, 1938; Maurice Evans, *G. K. Chesterton*, 1939; R. Las Vergnas, *Portraits anglais*, 1937; M. Ward, *G. K. C.*, 1944.

vehemently the modern errors which prey upon the frank, merry health of the heart: *Puritanic sourness, pessimistic morbidity, the unrest of minds that have lost, along with faith, their very balance*; and most of all, the most serious disease of our time, the reasoning mania of unregulated intelligences. The methods of science and philosophy are arbitrary; their conclusions are distressing only to those fools who have gratuitously bound themselves up with their chimerical endeavour. The perceptions enclosed in the experience of the centuries contain the substantial treasure of reliable things, the things which help one to live; religion is the common background of all those perceptions; and authority, which gathers

kind to slavery; and the panacea of rational theorists, State Socialism, makes the serfdom of every one only worse. Economic harmony, just like the fraternity of hearts, can be revived by an enlightened return to the ideal of the Middle Ages. The eager, swarming activity of the old trade associa-

... to selfishness

... *Napoleon of*

absurd excess; and obeying a sort of compensatory need, it jingles noisily the bells of a paradoxical invention. His literary temperament is that of a humorist, bent upon refreshing a severely traditional doctrine through the constant unexpectedness of his style. A belief in the fruitful novelty of the most ancient truths, such is the motive behind those verbal variations, upon themes which are overgrown to the point of being lost sight of; the movement and the tricks of

... conviction

... search for

... a not only

... terton has

... s, and the

originality of his orthodoxy does not lie exclusively in the *humour with which it is presented*: common sense, when all is said, is the most precious and the least commonplace vein of

thought. But he has not subjected his spontaneous manner to the control of a sufficiently exacting artistic conscience; the quality of his improvisations is very unequal; and although his personality possesses the value of a sign, only a few among his writings do not bear the stamp of the ephemeral.

The same general fund of ideas is to be found in the works of Hilaire Belloc,[1] poet, novelist, critic, essayist, controversialist. The unity underlying his very various, and no less unequal, literary creations might be traced to a spirit of audaciousness and adventure, which is ever bidding defiance to cautious ways and routine-loving fears. Routine and timidity are all, in the eyes of Belloc, on the side of cold reason, and of those scientific systems of knowledge which are forcing a hopeless monotony upon the world. His aim, often a successful one, is to strike out a gushing freshness and surprise from all the happenings of the wayside; to embroider an unsubstantial matter with the most profuse arabesques; to feel and reveal the beauty of the earth, the unexpectedness of familiar prospects, the richness of life. The lack of responsibility in a thought which does not revolve round a fixed axis, and does not care to have one because its centre of gravity is beyond the plane of logic, deprives this mental energy of all lasting influence upon many minds. But Belloc's paradoxes are more careful than those of Chesterton; his manner is freer from tricks; while he has not the same vigour, he possesses a more varied and surer charm of expression.

The affinities of intellectual temperaments make it possible to class with those two free-lances of tradition a writer who, without taking a direct share in the conflicts of ideas, allowed the persuasive preferences of his imagination to emanate from his work. Maurice Hewlett[2] lived in the past; his subdued Romanticism, cured of all fever, found a refuge from the present in the nobility and beauty of chivalrous ages; against the realism of a positive century he set up the refinements of

[1] Hilaire Belloc, born in 1870 near Paris, of a French family of Catholics, was brought up in England, studied at Oxford; became naturalized English in 1903; member of Parliament from 1906 to 1910; published poems: *Verses and Sonnets*, 1895, etc.; travel tales: *The Path to Rome*, 1902, etc.; novels: *Emmanuel Burden*, 1904, etc.; essays: *On Nothing*, 1903, etc.; political studies: *The Servile State*, 1912, etc. See Thomas Seccombe, *The Bookman*, vol. xlix (Nov. 1915); study by C. C. Mandell and E. Shanks, 1916; P. Braybrooke, *Some Thoughts on Hilaire Belloc*, 1923; Las Vergnas, *Chesterton, etc.*, 1938.

[2] Maurice Hewlett (1861–1923), barrister and magistrate, published imaginative or historical novels: *The Forest Lovers*, 1898; *The Life and Death of Richard Yea-and-Nay*, 1900; *The Queen's Quair*, 1904, etc.; poems, *Helen Redeemed, etc.*, 1913; *Selected Poems*, 1926, etc.

an art which was not afraid of ...

like H
find s
otherw
The
the d...

return to
whose pr
a persona ... pression.

Lastly, it is no paradox to rank with the defenders of tradition a writer who figured, for a time, as an intrepid mouthpiece of the spirit of criticism: Mrs. Humphry Ward.[3] Brought up under intellectual influences, she wrought the conflict between literal faith and the new exegesis into a story of lasting significance (*Robert Elsmere*). It was already apparent that her temperament was leading her to conservative solutions; but her having outspokenly interpreted certain anxious qualms was set down, not undeservedly, to the boldness of her spirit. The inexperienced, moving vigour of the drama of the ...
al
w
na ... whether the matter studied is a

[1] Edward Frederic Benson (1867–1940); *Dodo*, 1893; *Dodo the Second*, 1914; *David Blaize*, 1916, *Colin*, 1923; *Colin II*, 1925, *As We Are*, 1932, etc

[2] Edward Thomas, born in 1878, killed in action, 1917, published critical studies and poems: *Collected Poems*, 1936 See R P Eckert, *Edward Thomas*, 1937.

[3] Mary Arnold (1851–1920), niece of Matthew, born in Tasmania, married Mr. Humphry Ward; after the resounding success of *Robert Elsmere*, 1888, she published *The History of David Grieve*, 1892; *Marcella*, 1894, *Sir George Tressady*, 1895; *Helbeck of Bannisdale*, 1898, *Eleanor*, 1900, *Lady Rose's Daughter*, 1903; *The Marriage of William Ashe*, 1905, *Fenwick's Career*, 1906; *The Case of Richard Meynell*, 1911 *The* ...
See her ...

religious crisis, a political career, a sentimental knot, or poverty, and the palliatives which charity can apply to it, the social aspect of the struggling tendencies is blurred by the atmosphere of an essential conventionality. Stripped of their actual rawness, the problems treated lose much of their convincing humanity. The picture of aristocratic circles, however, keeps its genuine value. The psychology in Mrs. Ward's novels has all the merits of painstaking analysis, not those of unerring creation. The style, laborious as it is, speaks to the intelligence, not to the imagination. A generous-minded writer thus enslaves herself, of her own free will, to the respectabilities of every kind, which she looks up to as laws. The very sense of the future vanishes; all the solutions presented tend to maintain the salutary hierarchy of things: nothing remains but the sincere, and not undignified, clinging of instinct to a society from whose system of precedence and rules it derives almost complete satisfaction.[1]

4. *Socialism: Shaw, Wells, etc.*—English Socialism was born in the stormy years of the early Victorian period; it subsided during the middle years of prosperity and balance; it awoke into new life before the end of the nineteenth century. Its economic doctrine was moulded into more precise shape by the combined influences of the Marxian system, of Henry George (*Progress and Poverty*, 1880), and of a group of men upon whom the seal of national characteristics is plainly set, the Fabian Society. Thenceforth, an abundant literature of explanatory tracts or polemical treatises develops round the theme of the social problem. A large number of thinkers, theorists, and artists give expression to more or less open sympathies for Socialism, without making it a main issue in their works. But some gifted writers, following William Morris's example, bind up their intellectual destiny with its cause. The part played by this movement in the growth of their ideas is so important that they can be studied from no other point of view. However independent their critical judgments may remain, this positive conviction is one of the central beliefs upon which their lives and thoughts are hinged.

Bernard Shaw,[2] like every interesting thinker, is not re-

[1] Other writers who have figured earlier or who will figure later, from the point of view of their dominant characteristics, under other headings, could naturally be added to these.

[2] George Bernard Shaw, born in 1856 in Dublin, of Protestant middle-class family and English descent, was early conscious of a literary calling; after various occupations, he lived by his pen as a journalist, then dramatist. His

ducible to simple terms. The set purpose of aggressive clear- [illegible] fruitful career allows those shades to come out more clearly. His literary figure, however, can be sketched in a few strokes of the brush. His predominant characteristic is a fearless intellectual criticism. This is not original, to speak properly. [illegible] Wagner, Karl Marx—and to the last three, at least, he is, no doubt, largely indebted—he had in England an immediate precursor, whose disciple he confessed himself The principles of his criticism, and even the objects to which he applies them, are, indeed, very similar to those of Samuel Butler, the author of *Erewhon*. The analogy is deep-laid and striking, and it stretches even further than might be inferred from the differences of the themes and artistic forms.

[illegible]

tellectual debate. He has thus invested the
noughts with the exuberant liveliness of form.
G. K. Chesterton, devoted a very similar method,
vigour, to the furtherance of a directly contrary
Samuel Butler would enclose a corrosive mean-
rained and mystifying expression, Shaw has
e satire of all values, by throwing upon it the
rresistible comedy. Such was the need of his
us; such, again, was the optics of the medium
which he chose for his own. The boldest out-
ligence had always, in England, found accept-
a pretended lightness of tone. The author of
the most subversive things comically; Swift's
d his cruel intentions with mockery. When
dy as *his instrument, Bernard Shaw was follow-*
tion, and obeying a just instinct. Laughter
ain of a contrast too forcibly felt between human
d facts; it is to the writer the most natural
et; to the spectator or the reader, it is the most
the easiest alternative to what would be the
deliberate adhesion. Laughter allows one to
ence without condoning it; and while tolerating
what infected by it. Therefore Bernard Shaw
ainer, but with no loss to his dignity. He
stage, not booth boards. His manner is no
he practice of a mental hygiene. It is also an
ical policy. To charge him with gratuitous
paradox, or self-advertisement—as is still too
decidedly unjust; his thought is coherent and
nts not for himself, but for his ideas. Samuel
en misunderstood or ignored; he set himself to
the general public, and won it.

with his master, he has still a further originality
or less clever staging of a doctrine common
en confronted with the economic structure of
's pitiless criticism had abdicated. Even here
is no creator; he has read Karl Marx and Henry
he brings a courageous, clear mind to the study
ems; and for the first time in Great Britain, he

Bernard Shaw has thus added
extensive, to the domain in wh
sincerely free mind may find h
established order of ideas or fact

Bernard Shaw's Socialism has
matic at first, and leaning to radi
in his early manhood, under th
keenly aware of facts; it has
Marxian orthodoxy, and has even
average thought of the Fabian
of his nature have successively
it; his strongly marked indivi
anarchist tendencies, the conne
organization of collectivism h
visible. His fundamental lack
sallies and gibes aimed at the
which neither the men nor the i
his allegiance were free. But h
indictment which it had drawn
economic disorder, and the unju
deepest honesty is bound up wi
of his intellectual faith, on the
principle and the hope of a ratio

His other tenets agree well
implied in this attitude; and als
enthusiasm—were it even an a
which those passions of the mind
may have won converts by its
remained a Socialist for motiv
Shaw's youth was touched with
The negative aspect of his id
prominent. A pugnacious writ
iconoclast. The motive-power
realization of the unconsciousnes
thought of his time is still livi
of thinkers has probed under the
orthodoxy; and the self-satisfact
secure as it was in its opinions

fits in their proposed solution with a general rationalist criticism. William Morris's initiative had had a more limited scope, because his intellectual outlook was not so broad; his Socialism had not been embodied in a whole system of philosophical opinions, deduced from the sole search for truth. Bernard Shaw has thus added a province, and not the least extensive, to the domain in which an Englishman led by a sincerely free mind may find himself in a conflict with the established order of ideas or facts.

Bernard Shaw's Socialism has undergone a change. Dogmatic at first, and leaning to radical solutions, it was mitigated, in his early manhood, under the influence of a realism more keenly aware of facts; it has gradually drifted away from Marxian orthodoxy, and has even ceased to harmonize with the average thought of the Fabian group. The various instincts of his nature have successively expressed themselves through it; his strongly marked individualism has imbued it with anarchist tendencies, the connection of which with the firm organization of collectivism has not always been plainly visible. His fundamental lack of respect has broken out in sallies and gibes aimed at the mediocrity or weakness from which neither the men nor the ideas of a movement that had his allegiance were free. But his mind has not recanted the indictment which it had drawn up against what is to him [illegible] His [illegible] ength [illegible] is the principle and the hope of a rational reorganization of society.

His other tenets agree well enough with the resolution implied in this attitude; and also with the faculty of zeal and enthusiasm—were it even an abstract enthusiasm—but for which those passions of the mind cannot be lasting. Socialism may have won converts by its arguments; but no one ever remained a Socialist for motives of pure theory. Bernard Shaw's youth was touched with the fire of Shelley-worship. The negative aspect of his ideas, however, is the more prominent. A pugnacious writer, he has chiefly been an iconoclast. The motive-power which impels him is his keen realization of the unconsciousness in which the official, normal thought of his time is still living. The strenuous criticism of thinkers has probed under the very foundations of Victorian orthodoxy; and the self-satisfaction in which that age dwelt, secure as it was in its opinions, its institutions, its ethics,

suddenly assumes, under the acid test of intelligence, the character of an essential laziness and cowardice.

As Samuel Butler had done, Shaw tears off veils, and lays bare the half-voluntary illusions of complacently blind souls. Taking his stand on his property rights, an honest man may be directly responsible for a social sore (*Widowers' Houses*). In a régime of economic *laisser-faire*, a procuress is just a person in trade (*Mrs. Warren's Profession*). Military heroism is an invention of the civilians (*Arms and the Man*). A worthy clergyman, conscious of his philanthropy, eloquence, and idealism, may be at the same time in the clear-sighted eyes of his wife a harmless and defenceless man of words (*Candida*). The moral authority of parents is an antiquated fiction (*You never can tell*). The sentimental convention of passiveness in feminine manners hides the pursuit of that prey, the husband, by the girl, that hunter (*Man and Superman*). John Bull boasts of his practicality; but he is just a green sentimentalist when confronted with the Irishman (*John Bull's Other Island*). In a society based on money, it is mere hypocrisy not to confess that poverty is an epitome of all vices (*Major Barbara*). On the strength of his professional duty, a physician may be guilty of actual crimes (*The Doctor's Dilemma*). Marriage no longer corresponds either to a fact, or to an ideal (*Getting Married*). And so on. Thus the family, property, religion, science, and all the virtues from which society derives the comforting assurance of its moral worth, are vitiated by an inner life.

The counterpart of all this is not far to seek. Since all social evils are caused by the lack of intellectual courage, the cure in every case must be sought in the logic of a courageous thought. Bernard Shaw's logic obeys the dictates of his own nature; and here it is that the particular shades of his temperament reveal themselves. His reason leads him to profess a Socialism tempered with anarchy; to preach an ethics of ascetic simplicity; to bring love, the family, and the future of the species under the disciplinary law of a common sense fortified with 'eugenics'; to turn the 'superman' into a biological and near reality. But it leads him even further: to confute Darwin by means of Lamarck, as Samuel Butler had done; to set up vitalism against materialism; to discover at the core of the universe a 'Life-Force' which is at first that of Schopenhauer, but tends to become that of Bergson; to trace a current of divine will in the apparently fatal flood of

events. . . . A proclaimed enemy of sentimentalism, he still [illegible]

in fact, been effaced from the mind of Bernard Shaw. One of his later works (*Back to Methuselah*) seems to open the religious phase in which H. G. Wells had preceded him.

Those theses, whether positive or negative, are exactly fitted to stir out of its apathy the wider English public, little inclined as a rule to intellectual criticism. But they were diffused, about the end of the nineteenth century, in the very atmosphere of European thought. The international success of Bernard Shaw's drama is not due to the novelty or to the intrinsic value of his philosophy. Half-way from the abstract to the concrete, there are intermediary stages: the sensible aspects of those relations that the mind establishes, between the terms which pure analysis has brought out. Bernard Shaw perceives these relations as human and social facts. Therefore his imagination is that of the novelist or the playwright; and as he is much less gifted for patient studies of [illegible]

This literary form to-day answers one of the permanent tastes of the cultivated public; but it demands, if it is to be at all dramatic, that the warring principles shall be blended with the instincts of living personalities. Borrowing from Ibsen the general outline of his dramas of ideas, Bernard Shaw has not often succeeded, like him, in creating such conflicts of tendencies as would set at war human beings roused by the elemental passions of their natures There lies the most serious flaw of his drama. The larger number of his personages are instinct only with the life of intelligence, and are but the mouthpieces of the author Many of his plays degenerate into endless dialogue, in which the brilliancy of the verve cannot hide the artificiality of the situation. Profound dramatic life is most often lacking in his work. The reason is that emotion, the mainspring of interest, is almost constantly wanting. Bernard Shaw's characters bear the mark of the conscious will which has given them birth; few among them stir us with human sympathy. The oppositions that make them stand one against another, or the attractions

that unite them, are very rarely sources of pathos. Their very feelings, when brought into play, seem dry and merely cerebral. Few are the moments when the fictitious beings who move before us are suddenly lighted up with a mysterious poignant beauty; when their lips utter words that seem to come from a depth which analysis cannot probe. *Candida* perhaps has most of those transitory gleams; and this play, the most Ibsen-like and the least plainly intelligible Bernard Shaw has written, might be his dramatic masterpiece.

On the other hand, these plays fully possess the animation which can rise from the incessant stimulation of intelligence. Bernard Shaw displays all the resources of an original, though limited, art in bringing the characters, or rather the symbols, that confront one another, to join issue; in giving an edge to the expressions of their conflicts, and in striking out flashing formulae from their collisions. Always substituting himself for them more or less, when the time comes, the author addresses us; and then it is that there are unrolled before us in brilliant procession the 'paradoxes' whose effect of surprise, either piquant or revolting or revealing, is the essential element in the scenic life of those comedies. The mode of their rise is still the same: divesting a fragment of reality of its crusted conventions or habits, Bernard Shaw suddenly brings to light the new, unexpected, shocking sight of what lay beneath; a vivid contrast is thus created between this apparition, or the very words with which it is expressed, and, on the other hand, the traditional image or description; the latter, which keeps at least a latent life in our minds, forces an instantaneous comparison upon us, producing a violent mental revulsion, which contains an implicit and so a humorous element. It would be an exaggeration to state, as Bernard Shaw has done, that his vision is abnormal only because it is true. It happens at times that by reversing the usual order of the factors, he throws light upon, not the fecundity of his initiative, but the widsom of common sense, which has managed to register the most essential aspects of things. On the whole, however, he usefully renews and refreshes our notion of life and the world. Even when he irritates without convincing us, he makes our attachment to our own opinions better justified. He has been one of the most active leavening influences in the moral transformation of contemporary England.

Such is this drama, with which, no doubt, the boldness of a free mind has more to do than mere paradox, but which is itself

most often consist in the part they play and the philosophy they embody; but many of them valiantly bear such a burden, and make themselves acceptable to our amused curiosity, if not to our intuition of what is possible, through the saving grace of their characteristic significance. Humour, and the gift of telling words, and the profound sense of the diversity of human opinions, are the salt which keeps this fragile literary kind fresh and living. The action, which Ibsen carefully built out of the resources of his powerful dramatic technique, is here simplified, wholly artificial, and sometimes non-existent. Such plays are as fit to be read as to be staged, and perhaps fitter. The author is aware of it; his stage directions have grown to unusual, to enormous lengths; substantial prefaces, more than once, have undertaken to point out the meaning

There

ustly be

sesses a

an almost poetical fancy,

back to Romantic comedy

any of his plays, in fact,

cessful on the stage, their

r an initial period, in which

his manner was, no doubt, too austere, and he exacted too heavy an effort from his audience, he has known how to spare their nerves, and temper his severe lessons with seductive displ

As his career;

but surprises in

Ibsen's problem play, and Butler's thought,

, he has

e English

from its

century-old torpor.

So vast is the work of H. G. Wells,[1] that its various parts

[1] Herbert George Wells (1866–1946), born at Bromley, Kent, came of a very

upil

e he

ree,

ews,

vels

ters

nd of

must be classified. He has written short sto
founded on the particular species of the ma
modern science can suggest. From biology
mechanics, he passed on to the problems of the
a Socialist and sociologist, he has lived for
century in a daily intercourse of the mind wi
the disappointments, the hopes, of the search f
extended to all. This energy of social reflecti
of his novels, in which the critical analysis of w
with the study of what should or might be; in w
ate feeling of the collective drama that man
the earth, quickened by personal motives, s
guides his imagination. The novel thus become
of evil in all its forms, and an ample discussion o
it develops at the same time towards internatio
the solidarity of peoples and the supremacy of
are already adumbrating them; and towards
losophy, the free examination of supreme ques
issues. Already on the eve of the War, and
and after it, the thought of H. G. Wells has ta

Dr. Moreau, 1896; *The Invisible Man*, 1897; *The War of*
When the Sleeper wakes, 1899; *The First Men in the Moon*,
the Gods, 1904; *In the Days of the Comet*, 1906; *The War in th*
lished in various forms). A Socialist, he originally belong
group, but broke away from it; he wrote for it *The Mise*
Socialism ar[illegible] New Worlds for Old, 1908. At t
collected his [illegible] sociology: *Anticipations*
kind in the [illegible] *rn Utopia*, 1905; *The F*
1906; *An Englishman looks at the World*, 1914. After some
given the central place in his novels to social problems: *The*
1896; *Love and Mr. Lewisham*, 1900; *Kipps*, 1905; *Tono-Bung*
1909; *The History of Mr. Polly*, 1910; *The New Machiavelli*
1912; *The Passionate Friends*, 1913; *The World set Free*, *The*
Harman, 1914; *Bealby*, *The Research Magnificent*, 1915. His
philosophy are to be found in *First and Last Things*, 1908 (revis
and under the influence of the War he treated social and reli
Mr Britling sees it through, 1916; *God the Invisible King*, *The S*
1917; *Joan and Peter*, 1918; *The Undying Fire*, 1919; *The S*
Heart, 1922; *Men like Gods*, 1923; *The Dream*, 1924; *Christin*
1925; *The World of William Clissold*, 1926; *Meanwhile*, 1927
on Rampole Island, 1928, etc.; while the reorganization of
manded by the War, has inspired *The War that will end W*
coming? 1916; *The Elements of Reconstruction*, 1916; *War and*
In the Fourth Year, 1918; *The Outline of History*, 1920; *The S*
tation, 1921; *A Year of Prophesying*, 1925; *Democracy und*
The Open Conspiracy, 1928; *The Way the World is going*,
works include *The Shape of Things to Come*, 1933; *The Anato*
1936; *Star Begotten*, 1937; *Apropos of Dolores*, 1938; *The Holy*

bent in this direction. He figures at the present day as a spiritual guide of suffering humanity, the adviser of nation blinded by their hostilities, of individuals whom their selfishness is making unconscious. While science, its facts, it methods, have not vanished from the background of hi mind, he has taken his stand with Carlyle and Ruskin i

very

typ

—or one, at least, whose influence had hardly yet been fel in literature. The predominant spirit of his surroundings ha not, through the subtle working of education and atmosphere attenuated the vigour of his democratic instincts; moreove he has received from science his mental habits, his maste intuitions, and classical culture has had no chance to shap his robust originality according to the traditional ideal of a resigned humanism. Having reached the life of art throug those independent ways, H. G. Wells possessed a revolutionar force in his unadulterated instincts The writers who cam like him from the lower-middle rank—as, for instance, Dicken —had accepted the superiority of the social system outsid which they had been born; they had desired to enter it, wer

into i

ry, see

, and al

o yiel

of causes, full of the sense of the complexity ... vital reactions, but also of the power which the experimente

Even leaving out many temperamental shades, such is the source of the mental difference between Wells and Shaw. They meet on a plane of equally audacious criticism; in many respects, the general outlines of their solutions coincide; the common starting-point of both is Fabian Socialism; originally, to both of them, intelligence is the single criterion of truth, of justice. But Bernard Shaw's education was more normal; he is more thoroughly submissive to the discipline of mathematical reason: he sees problems from the point of view of logic. Wells is under the ascendancy of concrete perception; not that which supports the elementary and passive kind of empiricism, but that of a superior empiricism, which will proceed to investigations, and take initiatives in the presence of facts. So there is in Wells's thought more elasticity, a greater power of self-renovation; it has remained more broadly in touch with reality. He is thus led to test in himself the very instruments of knowledge; to establish modest conclusions upon an attentive and shrewd psychological analysis; and thus it is that his philosophical confession, *First and Last Things*, breathes a rationalism so curiously tempered by pragmatic avowals. His perception of the concrete is doubtless also the cause of the very marked intellectual evolution which has made him more and more keenly alive to the incalculable elements in human life—passions, desires, impulses; to the gleams of beauty, to the secret and powerful activities of idealism; and which has made him a prophet.

The very cause, however, which broadens Wells's thought and makes it more supple, must be acknowledged to narrow its scope in some respects. This thought feeds on experience; but experience is individual; generalization, and the sense of broader issues, should be constantly at work, in order to counteract its essential relativity. It is obvious that Wells has not always succeeded in escaping this danger. His feeling of all problems is stimulated by a quivering personality; but it is also agitated, disturbed, on occasion warped by it. His critical or constructive endeavour will be strictly controlled at times by his grievances or his passions, not in so far as they are human, but in so far as they are accidental.

Impulsive as it is, and diversified by an inner movement which has not yet allowed it to find a resting-place, his thought is none the less one of the most substantial in contemporary Europe; it is the centre of his work, and imparts to it a radiating virtue of fecundity. Through it, more efficiently than

through any other, the wider Anglo-Saxon public has been initiated in the intense moral disturbance of an unsettled age. It is to it that the writer and the artist mostly owe their appeal and their value.

Bernard Shaw's satirical study of English society was like the demonstration of a series of theses, which, according to a simple and almost mechanical device, reversed the usual order of certain terms. That of Wells rather reminds one of an anatomical dissection; it reveals to us the depth and inner condition of tissues. This is why it is so instructive; it does *not separate, but on the contrary, unites* facts and souls, the material and the moral elements of the social organization. It aims at tracing their concatenation, from the dim region where economic forces, silent and all-powerful traditions, implicit instincts, are interwoven in the very woof of the established order, to the superior plane where in full light are displayed the public relationships of the classes, official feelings, political ideas and formulae. What a Balzac and a [illegible] in France, Wells does again in England, with

intuition of group psychology less vigorous than that of the second, but with a sociological sense more precise than that of either. Such a study as that which we find in *Tono-Bungay* of the structure of English society, with its two poles, the agri cultural, hierarchical, and superannuated civilization of the 'Bladesover system' and on the other hand the swarming world of commerce, advertising, and money, is a broad general picture of rare power, in which the lights are distributed by [illegible] that a scientist might envy.

in connection with particular [illegible]
point of view, that social anarchy is considered. A large part of his work as a novelist deals with the conflict between irresponsible passion, on the one hand, and, on the other, the necessity for some regulation of love, or the summary decrees *of morality* and *of law*; an already well-worn subject, which Wells treats with a frankness that oversteps the bounds of

Victorian respectability, but without all the delicacy of touch which such an analysis would require. *Ann Veronica* studies the emancipated girl, confronted with freedom and its snares, and the choice of a companion. *The New Machiavelli* portrays the struggle between political ambition and love, on the background of wordly Pharisaism. *Marriage, The Passionate Friends*, play variations on the same theme. Here, Wells does not reach a positive conclusion; he shows the facts as they are, difficult and painful, and sees no infallible solution. While Bernard Shaw demanded an unlimited extension of the facilities for divorce, he sets a very definite limit, in the interests of the race, to the fragility of unions.

The movement of his thought has ceaselessly progressed towards a more idealistic notion of the conditions of collective health. The Fabian in Wells has grown disenchanted as to a programme which he now deems bureaucratic, and has turned to a more inward theory of social reform. The actuality of a people's civilization, at a given time, is in its ideas and manners; to reconstruct a nation is to re-create the spirit of its public life. Already *Anticipations, Mankind in the Making*, had studied the development of man in its functional relation to a single predominant factor, science. Organized knowledge still remains in the eyes of Wells the great hope of mankind; the world, he believes, will assume a different aspect, as soon as the elementary connection between causes and effects in nature and life is more accurately perceived by all. The future of humanity, and more particularly that of Great Britain, is bound up with the problem of education. *Joan and Peter* grapples with the subject; and forcibly, in a raw light, under a simplified but not misleading perspective, points out the routine-loving empiricism of the present, and what might be substituted for it.

But science and ideas are neither the only motive-powers of the soul, nor the most powerful. Already before the War there were seen in Wells signs of an increasing attention to the claims of feeling—from love and passion, which are the making and undoing of individual destinies, through those moving intuitions which the philosopher acknowledged (*First and Last Things*), those sudden apparitions of beauty, those flashes of a light which the artist pronounced to be mysterious and unearthly, even to religious emotions properly so called. The shock of the War caused that budding mysticism to bloom. Socialism no longer stands in the foreground of Wells's

thought. His political theses are dominated by the a
and anguish of a high certitude, that of human unity
making. This faith interprets and unifies the history
world (*The Outline of History*); it opens the way to salv
for a Europe exhausted with violence, destruction, an
(*The Salvaging of Civilization*). Internationalism has b
the necessary form of Wells's intelligence and vision.
from the earth that moans as she carries her load of
through the skies, *from the race of men in which the f*
reason, of duty, of love burn in spite of all, a common a
tion meanwhile rises, a thrill of nature which another
answers in the abysm of space. The divine exists; it i
ceptible, and plain to our consciousness; it is aware
[illegible] but it tends to
[illegible]
[illegible]
centres in which will burn with increased energy that
less flame with which it is already glowing; a flame
cosmic radiance, meanwhile, lights, attracts, and gui
(*Mr. Brilling sees it through*, *The Undying Fire*, etc.)

Theology is a dangerous subject. Unbelievers hav
proached Wells with having touched it; believers, with
ing it otherwise than they themselves did. The fact i
his thought is somewhat indiscreet. Possessed as it is
impatience to understand and to express itself, it kno
limits to its ambition, no check upon its daring atte
But a sincere and truly religious intellectual humility
[illegible] of this seeming presumption. Wells's mysticism
[illegible] such an in
[illegible] not always
harmful to an already over-excitable artist. *The Un*
Fire has a concentration, a definiteness of outline wh
had but rarely reached.

The writer, indeed, is very unequal. The fanciful ta
the first period are now considered by the author hims
unpretending efforts. They possess, however, merits of
own. Written in a simple and straightforward manner
a natural sense of style, they serve their purpose very
They illustrate also the spontaneous movements of an ima
tion which takes a curious pleasure in modifying one

a later date will dream of a human order in which the progress of science will transform the equation of happiness. The works of pure sociology are among the most solid of his writings; in them the taking interest of the matter is set off by a sober animation, or an emotion that emphasizes the thought without dimming its clearness. When we come to the novels, we find more ambitious artistic aims; higher effects indeed appear, as well as more visible failings.

Among such works *Kipps* and *Tono-Bungay* are probably the best. These books are instinct with a single central impulse which carries them to their conclusions; the action in them, without being condensed beyond the probabilities of life, has a substantial unity. They have been conceived and realized by an intellectual ardour and by a verve not unfit to be matched. In the other novels, the energy is fitful; there seem to occur breaks in the continuity of the subject, of the plan, or of the writer's conviction; the development is liable to diffuseness and uncertainty. Through the whole of Wells's work, the value of the characters varies exceedingly, according to the fund of personal observation and subjective experience which enters into their substance; the category of beings he has best depicted is that which he had known in his childhood and youth, more or less directly about him; the obscure soul of a Kipps, the restless soul of a Ponderevo, contrasted with the magnificent assurance of his uncle; dyspeptic Mr. Polly, ambitious Remington, are of that order. Such striking figures are numerous enough to testify to a remarkable creative power, within its limits. The women and the girls are of inferior quality, and especially so whenever the psychology endeavours to be fine, or to draw an intense image of love. The passions that live here are those of imagination and the head, not those of the heart. The picture of surroundings, powerful in the analysis of social interrelations, is valuable when it deals with masses, and sketches a whole civilization, an historical moment, painted with a broad touch of the brush. When it is a question of describing more precise social circles, the author shows a familiar acquaintance only with the middle and lower-middle classes; in this field, indeed, his canvases are full, racy, and we feel that they are like. Here again, the humour is natural, easy, and genial enough, though not of a very rare quality.

The calm and quietly evocative style of the early books has grown more feverish; it is now loaded with ardour, intentions,

and a kind of impressionism which reveals a richer vision, a more extensive command of language, the anguish of the

too often missing at a later date, being replaced by a heated abstraction which is neither quite argument nor quite poetry. Still, the central vigour of the thought, and the sincerity of

open to an individual to practise it. Edward Carpenter[1] felt influences: that of Ruskin, that of Whitman, that of Hindu mysticism; but the central decisions of his personality are his own. A poet, an aesthetician, a moralist, a psychologist, he displayed in several fields an original talent, too exclusively occupied with a gospel of universal brotherhood to give to expression the rigorous care without which there can be no perfection; inspired, however, and able to invest a high enthusiasm with taking images and rhythms His philosophy, all looking out towards the future, examined the most delicate problems of spiritual civilization with intuitive healthy audacity. His seduction as a literary figure lies in his generous humanity, the harbinger of new times,

[1] Edward Carpenter, (1844—1929), studied at Cambridge, renounced a Church career, taught science, came into contact with the working classes,

biography. *My Days and Dreams*, 1916 See studies by E Crosby, 1905, E. Lewis, 1915; A H M Sime, 1916; T Swan, 1922, G Beith, 1931

h of Literature, 3 vols, 1940; F. W. Chandler, *Aspects of Modern Drama*
:l Chevalley, *Le Roman anglais de notre temps*, 1921; A. Chevrillon
es de littérature anglaise, 1921; B. H. Clark, *A Study of Modern Drama*
:onnes, *La Pensée de H. G. Wells*, 1926; J. Drinkwater, *English Poetry*
hed History, 1938; B. Fehr, *Englische Prosa von 1880 bis zur Gegen*
; E. Guyot, *Le Socialisme et l'évolution de l'Angleterre contemporaine*
n, *H. G. Wells*, 1921; A. Henderson, *European Dramatists*, 1913
ewood, *Dramatic Criticism*, 1938; J. L. Lowes, *Convention and Revol*
new ed., 1938; J. M. Manly and E. Rickert, *Contemporary Britisl*
new ed., 1929; E. Muir, *Introduction to English Literature*, vol. v.
nt Age, 1939; W. L. Phelps, *The Advance of the English Novel*, 1916
ays on Modern Dramatists, 1921; F. Roz, *Le Roman anglais contem*
12; G. N. Shuster, *The Catholic Spirit in Modern English Literature*
Williams, *Modern English Writers*, 1920.

---

g less prominent novelists who are still not to be passed over, and who,
nodern their outlook may be, yet belong to the nineteenth century,
l mention: Sir Walter Besant (1836–1901), the social and historical
Sorts and Conditions of Men, 1882; *All in a Garden Fair*, 1883, etc.
oughton (1840–1920), a realist: *Dear Faustina*, 1897, etc. H. Rider
(1856–1925), the historical novel and romance: *King Solomon's*
85; *She*, 1887, etc. Anthony Hope (Sir A. Hope Hawkins, 1863–
novel of adventure and society life: *The Prisoner of Zenda*, 1894,
:. Jerome (1859–1927), the humorous novel: *Three Men in a Boat*,
is Malet (Mary St. Leger Harrison [1852–1931], a daughter of
ingsley), the realist and feminist novel: *The Wages of Sin*, 1894;
y of Sir Richard Calmady, 1901, etc. W. H. Mallock (1849–1923), a
d realist: *The New Republic*, 1877; *A Human Document*, 1892, etc.
orrison (born 1863), the realist and social novel: *Tales of Mean Streets*,
Child of the Jago, 1896, etc. Olive Schreiner (Mrs. S. C. Cronwright
1859–1920), a realist: *The Story of an African Farm*, 1883, etc.
ing (1840–1928), the realist and social novel: *No. 5 John Street*,

CHAPTER V

CONTEMPORARY TENDENCIES

1. *Literary Individualism.*—It is a commonplace remark [illegible] ise study of a [illegible] Perspective [illegible]

all its aspects; the characteristic features have not stood out in full relief.

More difficult still than the valuation of merits is the ordering of groups. An inner principle of classification can no longer be put into practice. The personality of each writer remains *hidden; his own reserve, and a scruple of delicacy in his* readers, prevent the latter from invading those recesses by force. The implicit confessions to be found in books need to be explained and completed. Few are the authors who [illegible] 's not, as a [illegible] apher and [illegible] to use all their methods of investigation, only when the man they deal with is r [illegible] 'ead.

It is [illegible] the present [illegible] The *division* [illegible] A rapid survey will be here attempted of the novel, the drama, and poetry.

[illegible] Never did the [illegible] compared with [illegible] ver did tempera- [illegible] a common style, one method, one programme. It has often been noticed that the era of literary doctrines and schools seems to be over. The twentieth century in Great Britain bears the same parcelled-out aspect as in France. In spite of the effort *towards unity which was represented by the doctrines of action,*

the variety of tendencies, on the eve of the War, was unlimited. The future will tell whether the new period, which English literature may be now entering, is to witness a reappearance of simple lines and of an accepted discipline; and whether the predominantly intellectual age which has been called for by the law of moral rhythm, is to put an end by means of a strong synthesis to a phase of diverging instincts.

In order that this should be the case, it would be necessary that the moral and social changes caused by the War should deeply renovate the inner sources of art and thought. For the literary individualism of the present day is no superficial fact; it springs from a development of long standing; it is brought about by the very advance of psychological complexity, and by the subconscious persistence of the past in the present.

The wiser course is to admit that nature does not nowadays produce a larger number of original temperaments; but each one's originality knows better how to show to advantage; it knows better how to define itself. Every mind finds the elements of such a definition ready made. It possesses the necessary means of comparison in its inner treasure of latent memories. The number and the diversity of the tendencies which each individual carries in himself, because of psychological heredity, now broaden the margin of variation in which personal differences can find place, and favour the clear perception of these differences. For the memory of the race has not only kept records of the past phases of development; it has preserved some trace, as well, of the aesthetic judgments which respectively answered to each of those phases; it dimly revives, in every consciousness, the series of the earlier preferences of taste. Here is felt the influence of culture, the more developed and widely diffused as a people's civilization is further advanced. Education turns into a clear notion the obscure intuition, previously owned by each individual being, of the main artistic types that have been successively realized, and of the corresponding attitudes of sensibility. Thus it is that modern writers will reach the age of literary creation with a definite idea both of what they want to create, and of the particular place of their temperaments in the whole range of possibilities; with a critical vocabulary and a programme within reach. The history of the national letters and of other literatures has familiarized them from an early age with the principal species of aesthetic doctrines. It has become so easy

and so natural a thing to express one's own originality to one-

deprived of that antiquated ignorance can no longer unite, or believe that they unite, in the simple worship of the same forms of beauty.

cult. So numerous are now the traces which the previous stages of moral development, and especially the literary phases, have left in the *memory of the group*, and conse-

reaction no longer revives the full joy of novelty; it rather awakes the impression of a thing seen before. The periods of the inner rhythm henceforth interpenetrate and contain one another; they cannot succeed in forgetting one another. *The point of saturation seems reached. The attempts of* artistic sensibility to create something new carry within themselves the dim but perceptible memory of similar efforts already attempted; and they are intuitively aware that the visible difference between the endeavour of the day before yesterday and that of to-day, is precisely due to the persistent influence of that very mood of yesterday, from which consciousness is trying to escape. Thenceforward the way is hardly open to a renewing of literary inspiration through those vast movements of the soul, to which the minds of a whole generation rally with the enthusiasm and the pleasure of self-discovery. Programmes then, if wide, are necessarily commonplace; and if precise, must include so many particular features that they become exaggeratedly individual in character.

influential, and most cultivated classes of society. As for those whose culture is still incomplete, they show more elasticity. The education of taste has a double effect: on the one hand, it makes the exercise of inborn faculties more easy; it develops talents, strengthens and improves their expression; it thus adds materially to their number. On the other hand, by stimulating in each mind the consciousness of itself, and chiefly the knowledge of the national past, it intensifies the working of elementary psychological memory, and tends to make the eager innovating initiatives of genius more rare. The contemporary period, during which, in England as elsewhere, education has become widely diffused, witnesses the birth of literary talents in greater abundance than ever before. The universities have given rise to a whole swarm of poets. Creative gifts, however, are not more frequent; and they seem to reveal themselves preferably outside the circles most permeated with scholarly culture. Some independence, a certain irregularity, even gaps, in the formation of a mind and the instruction of its taste, seem to foster the growth in it of virgin instincts, and of a superior originality. There had always been erratic geniuses; but this remark would imply that their number was on the increase. In fact, the most generally known English writers of yesterday and to-day —except Galsworthy—would confirm these views. Neither Hardy, nor Kipling, nor Wells, nor Conrad, nor Bennett, nor Shaw, nor Lawrence, has felt, in the proper sense, the influence of the universities.

It thus would seem as if the literary individualism of the present time were deeply connected with the multiplicity of talents, and the divorce between normal culture and genius; while the causes of these two facts might be found in the growing moral senescence which is made inevitable by a prolonged psychological evolution. On the threshold of an era which endeavours to be new, it would thus be necessary to regard a stagnation, brought about by the wearing out of the inner spring which produces renewals, as a consequence difficult to escape; and one would have to expect a genuine renewing only from a substantial addition of fresh energy, the origin of which might be either in vast moral and social changes, or in the broadening of consciousness to the full extent of the Empire or of all mankind. But the very problem of spiritual nationalities, and of their adaptation to a different civilization, is thus raised. English literature, in spite of

some symptoms, does not yet seem to have solved it—neither has it been solved by any other.

2. *The Novel*.—The novel remains in England an instrument of expression of unlimited elasticity. It is chosen by the most diverse temperaments, and serves to explain all theses, to register the most varied experiences. It constitutes by itself two-thirds of original literary production.

From that swarming mass of writers, in which the gifted ones are many, not a few stand out more prominently—a prominence that bids fair to be confirmed by time. Among these, two groups can
two generations, whicl
istics, still more than

lived through the War, they received no informing influence from that troubled time; so that their work, however fresh and alive it may still be, strikes us as the picture of a spiritual world already vanishing.

The novels of Barrie[1] were even published before 1900. In his mingling of sentiment with realism and humour, he is heir to a national tradition. He follows Dickens when he indulges a fondness for simple domestic affections, even if his discipleship to Meredith, and his early cult of Stevenson, have

first keyed up to an almost Russian pity for human suffering; and growing with his time, he discovered in himself, along with a bent towards moral analysis, a set of formulae

[1] Born in Scotland, James (later Sir James) Barrie (1860–1937) began literary

See I Moult, *J M Barrie*, *piration*, 1938;

D Mackail, *Intimate Life Story of J M Barrie*, 1939

equivalent to those which the new psychology was going to popularize. Like Sterne, he is alive to the irresistible appeal, while he sees through the willing self-deception, of sentimentality; like the Freudian school, although with a widely different aim, he lays stress on the dark tangled underworld of the soul. These are but transitory intuitions, and a vain clear-sightedness; they fail to appease the perturbed and almost anguished habit of a personality, so eager to taste the bliss of tender emotions, that it cannot escape their lure, free itself from their hidden ambiguousness, and raise itself, a coherent whole, upon the disillusioned acceptance of things as they are. Realism therefore with Barrie is only a starting-point; the image of the world, at times instinct with an implicit cruelty, often ironical, which he draws, is idealized by the magic of feeling even in his simplest idylls of daily life; he dwells on the sheer facts of experience merely to rise above them, and to open a way for the potent spells which only the heart can cast. Already his indulgent, smiling studies of Scottish manners, and the homage of tender regret he devoted to the memory of his mother, showed his bent towards that freedom of imagination which was to become the main impulse of his art. In *Sentimental Tommy*, *Tommy and Grizel*, psychological studies of remarkable keenness are all wrapped up in fancy, and read like the confessions of a divided soul, too sincere not to see the truth, too fond of dreams not to feed its illusions upon them. One seems to catch, under the satire and the humour, an undertone like a repressed sob, and as it were a quivering of the nerves, exquisite both in its pleasure and its pain, which recalls the peculiar manner of Sterne, although it falls short of the most piercing notes of that morbid genius.

Peter Pan has been put on the stage, and that charming fairy tale assumes its full significance only there. Numberless readers still, whether young or grown up, have been won, in all the English-speaking countries, by the story itself, in which the imagination has its way no less simply than boldly. The secret of the child's soul is there rediscovered, and it lies in the quiet acceptance of the patently impossible, fused with the most particular and most gratuitous realism. A vein of sentiment, very dear to the nations of the north, runs through all those scenes in which the frankest love for adventure and a graceful tenderness have unlimited sway; but along with very orthodox moral principles, a philosophy can be found in

language, a manifest and all-comprehensive mastery; that abnormal something, to which, on English soil, the expert and complacent handling of linguistic resources seems to point. In fact, Joseph Conrad's prose style, at least during the early part of his career, would leave upon British ears an impression of slightly exaggerated sonorousness and rhythm.

His art is the most composite product. However essential may be the element of original initiative in his development, the form which he took up, either from instinctive choice or because he had experienced its appeal, had been created by others: it is the novel of adventure, whose new possibilities Stevenson and already Kipling were illustrating; and he combined with it the objective spirit of French naturalism. The movement and the method of his psychology, the attention he pays to the various points of view which cross and recross one another round each being, owe something to Henry James. Lastly a background of Slav sensibility, and the spirit of Russian novelists, are betrayed in the special quality of his perception of the mysterious, and in his philosophy of life.

This complex of influences is dominated by a temperament which turns it into a brilliant, rich, and original alloy. Joseph Conrad was quite conscious of his manner: he has given a theory of it. This is the direct echo of his inevitable preferences; but one feels that it was encouraged as well by the doctrines of Maupassant and Flaubert. Art is self-sufficient; the artist has no object but to fully transmit the impression of reality; and the senses are the best, or rather the only, way open to this expression. Therefore the novelist must draw from all the resources of the arts, whether of colour and shape or of sound; his work should have the bright hues of painting, the solidity of sculpture, the rhythm and harmony of music. He has fulfilled this programme to the letter; not with painstaking accuracy, but with the sovereign ease of a talent which when obeying rules is but following its own instinct. The wealth, the vigour, and the glow of his descriptions are second to none in literature. The scenes which he calls up are very varied; but their succession naturally finds a centre in the image of the sea; it is from the deck of a ship that we witness the unrolling of the sights of the world; the smiles and furies of the ocean, the shipboard dramas, distant shores, the landscapes and manners of Oceania, of Asia, of America, and of those English seaports whither the liners find their way back, make up an intensely vivid show which forces itself upon our

view like a striking, almost haunting *décor*. The registering of lights, sounds, odours, and tastes is with Joseph Conrad's

psychological curiosity gives itself scope in slow ruminations, in analyses of dim souls, in complicated and subtle studies,

desire for objectivity has often led him to present the facts of his plots as reflected in one or several minds, the visions of which the reader is to follow and harmonize; and this method gives rise to some uncertainty, as it does to high and rare effects.

A violent, at times a raw realist, Joseph Conrad is also a thinker and a poet. While he does not set as an end to his art the search for ideas, which he regards as the proper object of the philosopher, he has allowed the emotions of an intelligence which does not refuse itself the human privilege of

the pressing suggestion of union, pity, and solidarity which emanates from his work. This appeal lends it a glow of sympathy, and raises it above the level of fiction pure and simple But its most contagious idealism lies in the tragic or dreamy sense of the unfathomable unknown which we brush past at

every moment; in that mystic spiritualization of the face of life or that of earth, which suddenly casts a glamour of poetry over the outlines or the action of the landscape. To the influences which Joseph Conrad has felt, one more, that of symbolism, is to be added; or rather, his temperament found itself naturally attuned to this note as it was to others.

He is not popular, in spite of the very high esteem in which he is held by the best judges, because of the harsh flavour of his work, foreign and European, careless of some conventions of the average English taste. He is doubtless not one of the great creative geniuses; but his personality is of the first order; he has, through a sheer miracle, wrought ill-assorted elements into a strong synthesis; he has, in a learnt language, fashioned an irresistible style, loaded with nervous impact of stern realities, carried onward by a rhythm which not only multiplies their hard rigour, but bathes it in a meditative music through which the soul catches an undertone of softer harmonies.

Arnold Bennett[1] has written much; but the highest interest and probably the permanent value of his work are concentrated in a definitely limited group of novels and short stories. The rest—drama, journalism, criticism, and even the studies of manners bearing on other subjects—is of secondary im-

[1] Arnold Bennett (1867–1931), born near Hanley, in the Potteries (Staffordshire), the son of a solicitor, developed by degrees into a journalist and critic, edited a magazine for women; his first novel, *A Man from the North*, appeared in 1898; then he devoted himself entirely to literature, resided in France from 1900 to 1908, married a Frenchwoman, and discovered the field of observation which was to bring him success with *Anna of the Five Towns*, 1902. Several years intervened, full of cop[illegible] before the success of *The Old Wives' Tale*, 1908, gave him [illegible] He exploited the same vein in a trilogy of novels: [illegible] *Lessways*, 1911; *These Twain*, 1916; *Clayhanger Family*, 1925; and [illegible] to renew his style in *The Pretty Lady*, 1918; *Riceyman Steps*, 1923; *Lord Raingo*, 1926; *The Strange Vanguard*, 1928; *Accident*, 1929; *Imperial Palace*, 1930. His writings, as diverse as they are unequal, comprise, with all kinds of secondary work, short tales: *Tales of the Five Towns*, 1905; *The Grim Smile of the Five Towns*, 1907; *The Matador of the Five Towns*, 1912; *Elsie and the Child*, 1924; *The Woman who stole Everything*, 1927; *The Night Visitor*, 1931; plays: *Gates of Wrath*, 1903; *What the Public wants*, 1909; *Miles* [illegible] 1912; *The Great Adventure*, 1913; *The Love Match*, 1[illegible]noblock), 1924; *Mr. Prohack*, 1927, etc.; books of [illegible] interest: *The Truth about an Author*, 1903; *How to become an Author*, 1903; *Literary Taste*, 1909 and 1912, ed. with additional lists by Frank Swinnerton, 1937; *The Author's Craft*, 1914; *Things that have interested me*, 1921, 1923, 1925. See F. J. H. Darton, *Arnold Bennett* (Writers of the Day), 1924; Wilbur L. Cross, *Four Contemporary Novelists*, 1930; Mrs. Bennett, *My Arnold Bennett*, 1931; G. West, *The Problem of Arnold Bennett*, 1932; *The Journals of Arnold Bennett*, edited by Newman Flower, 3 vols., 1933; D. C. Bennett, *Arnold Bennett*, 1935; J. B. Symons, *Arnold Bennett and his Novels*, 1936; G. Lafourcade, *Arnold Bennett, a Study*, 1939.

portance. He owes his place in literature to his pictures of provincial life.

Though unaware, in this field, of any conscious imitation, he takes up a tradition, that of minute, and at the same time broad and healthy realism, dwelling with indulgence upon the portraits of mediocre beings; his line is that of Dickens and George Eliot. [illegible]

by a whole century, nor George Eliot, who described a different world, had touched upon it before him. It is a drab and dull-looking mass of human beings, who swarm under the smoky skies of the industrial districts. Almost a parasitic growth, at first, in the body of the nation, it has become one of its essential and typical tissues. Among all industries, that of the Potteries is one of the most cheerless, because of the total absence of that romantic setting, whether fiery or grimly dark, which constitutes the poetry of iron or mining works. In these circles, where the average features of the race have been able to develop freely, escaping any intense or differentiated aspect, Arnold Bennett does not devote his attention to the industrial working man, who already is invested with associations of pitying or uneasy curiosity; but to a lower [illegible]

imperious will of the powerful industry on which, directly or indirectly, the district lives, a modern, neutral and prosaic subject-matter, if there ever was any.

Arnold Bennett's originality does not all reside in this choice. As compared with his predecessors, he is himself more modern, more conscious; he wishes to be freed from the influences which, in the novels of Dickens and George Eliot, interfere with the objectivity of the artist. He has breathed the atmosphere of another age, and his youth has felt the spell [illegible] In the [illegible] found [illegible] prefer- [illegible]

following them. To the most English of themes, he thus brings a technique, sincere, but permeated with European lessons. In so far as the artistic faultlessness he aims at leaves room for a personal reaction, Arnold Bennett allows us to feel in him a discreet half-pessimism, limited by the strong sense of duty, directed towards effort, soothed as well by the security which radiates from his very subject, from human groups in which moral responsibility is firm and safe. For Arnold Bennett, in spite of all, carries in his inmost fibres the preoccupation of conduct.

The Old Wives' Tale, the trilogy of *Clayhanger*, *Hilda Lessways*, and *These Twain*, make up a central fresco round which other tales—novels or short stories—group themselves. In spite of certain differences, a lighter touch and also a less abundant wealth in the other books of the series than in the first, they are all stamped with the unity of an artistic method. It proceeds by a number of minute touches, laid side by side and close together, answering to a truth which is self-sufficient, and does not aim at anything beyond itself. Effects of amplitude, of power, even of beauty, rise in a long run from their accumulated mass. Each scene, considered separately, is shown under a precise and somewhat cold light, in spite of the humour; and this picture of reality seems to be guided by the same ideal as that of photography. But life springs from the movement which educes one scene out of another; the mental image of an active social influence, with innumerable subtle or tangible aspects, is built out of all the pressures through which circumstances, material and moral forces, shape the destinies that are being told us. And these destinies have in them the particular logic of likelihood; they impress us with the feeling of a kind of fatality, rooted in the temperament of each being, developing with a flexible determinism, which is crossed with incidents and crises, and at every moment leaves some margin of freedom. Arnold Bennett is not a professed analyst; but he has created characters; his intuition of some souls penetrates them and seizes them with a vigorous hold.

These creations are neither very many nor very diverse. The special field of his psychology is that provincial lower middle class in which refinement is unknown, intelligence is simple, and complexity is restricted to feelings. Competent judges acknowledge a local truth in his most carefully studied portraits; it is said that the characters which he has best

known how to vitalize fit in inseparably with the setting in which he has placed them. They wear indeed a family look. Their truth, however, exceeds the limits of that circle of the 'Five Towns,' in which their lives are so narrowly cooped up, from which they escape only to come back to it, and whose simple artlessness they preserve, even in the pathos to which they sometimes rise. Their humanity broadens their significance; in them the common basis of a whole class and a whole people is visible. A cosmopolitan in some of his tastes, but [illegible]

effects; there is nothing here like Maupassant's concentration. Perfectly adapted to the subject-matter, this art submits to [illegible]

[illegible] variety of shades, [illegible] ost problems, they [illegible] turated with what they leave out. On the other hand, they rest upon a solid foundation; their harmony with a certain national and human nature, with some fundamental needs of our instinct of truth, imparts to them the character of what may last.

John Galsworthy[1] belongs to the same generation as Arnold [illegible]

Bennett. But his more supple talent seemed younger. Among the masters of yesterday, he was one of those whose development might still have had new features in store.

Born of equally typical English stock, and of a class more traditionally rooted to the soil, the country gentry, he yet has received as well a graft from abroad. His travels, his reading, have brought him very widely into contact with the thoughts, the manners, the art of many peoples. France and Russia have had a share in the formation of his realism. But nature had fitted him for the thorough assimilation of those influences. The sap of the English genius, which now will be more soft and now more rough, in him has fed the germ of a fine and generous sensibility; and while endowing him with that moral courage which is often the source of the idealism of the race, has fostered also a gift of a delicate perception, a keen penetration of intelligence. More aristocratic than H. G. Wells, he has thus brought no less clear and no less bold a mind to the analysis of the social order; as representative of his own country as Arnold Bennett, he has more efficiently mingled the national instincts with the lessons of unashamed objectivity which English literature was receiving from the outside world.

His temperament is that of a complete artist, rounded off by the emotions of a noble heart and the disquietude of a courageous thought. The exceptional quality of his work is due to the width of this range. Each note, in itself, is not free from some analogy with tones already heard; but it rings with a very pure sound, and the whole scale has the mellowness of a delightfully original art. John Galsworthy's criticism moves on parallel lines to that intellectual endeavour whose example, set by Matthew Arnold, Meredith, and Samuel Butler, is followed among the contemporaries by Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells; but he combines with it elements which are his own: a more thorough cosmopolitan detachment, the independence of a moral nature which regards without any prejudice the prominent or subtle traits of the British character, and appreciates them with bold freedom; on the other hand, a fundamental moderation, in which one divines, not the need of compromise, but a many-sided perception of things; a tact of the mind which never lets itself go as far as system, exaggeration, paradox, and which tempers logic with common sense. The pity of John Galsworthy continues a thoroughly English tradition; it reminds one of Dickens, and

of a whole century stirred by social compunction; it adds to that general background, to that philanthropy of so many tender souls, a more quick and intense, often painful thrill, which resembles that of the [illegible]
fraternity into w[illegible]
infused its ardou[illegible]
nature. Howeve[illegible] sentiment is free from all sentimentality—or almost so. Almost always, the reserve of the man, the economy of the writer, check the expression of emotion short of the limit where it would lose the merit of sobriety; and almost always feeling is imbued, from within, with a consciousness of its relativity, which intellectualizes it.

After tentative beginnings, the personality [illegible]
worthy [illegible]

[illegible] name exclu-
[illegible] will to live, are seen through and through by an awakening reflection. Stripped and reduced to essentials, this analysis of British society in the shortened perspective of a few figures and brief [illegible]
treme acuity, [illegible]
at times exces[illegible] un-
compromising [illegible] of mind, the example of which is in this case sought outside England. Again, the violent or narrow decrees by which that order is forced upon rebell[illegible]
instincts are [illegible]
and the [illegible]
its risk t[illegible]
demands [illegible] heart are
set again[illegible] policy of wisdom. In all its central and most typical part, the work of John Galsworthy develops this double antithesis.

He lends it more weight, more breadth, and also more demonstrative force, by investing it abundantly with concrete substance. *The Country House* analyses on a more detailed scale the little world which revolves round the traditional authority of the [illegible]

[illegible] solve it—the intellectuals, the artists; and through the powerlessness of their attempts, suggests the stubbornness of the evil, of the moral separation

of classes, which no individual remedies can cure. *The Freelands* directs the study towards the special domain of the land problem; *The Dark Flower* and *Beyond* bring it back to that conflict of passion of which John Galsworthy never loses sight, and leaving out all precise theses, analyse the revolt of the fervid or multiple truth of feelings, against the calm and permanency which orthodox happiness requires.

In a society founded upon money, however, property is the root of the outstanding oppositions of interests, feelings, and ideas. A series of narratives gathers round the fate of a family which symbolizes the reign of the instinct of personal ownership. The 'Forsyte Saga' (*The Man of Property*, *In Chancery*, *To Let*, etc.) has the powerful range of those vast imaginative constructions in which the modern novel, giving itself the broader scope of several generations and varied plots, has encompassed the psychological and social complexity of life. The masters of the hour, the financiers, merged in the class of the landed gentry, and gathering round them all the old forces of conservation, are studied in those works as the most vigorous representatives of the present order. A self-interested discipline, in them and about them, violently represses the independent powers of human nature—love, art, dreams, youth, change; and this drama, which, while enacted in the recesses of the soul, preserves a supremely precise and evocative significance, sums up the deepest struggle of our time between material civilization and moral truth.

Quite as much as those of H. G. Wells, John Galsworthy's novels are thus instinct with that social disquietude, the magnetism of which to-day attracts so many energies. But his thought, more finely shaded, is less aggressive; it partakes rather of the artist's or the moralist's curiosity, than of the spirit and zeal of a cause. His familiar acquaintance with the circles he describes lends a more just and keen impartiality to his picture of the ruling classes. He has delineated the character of a Jolyon or a Soames Forsyte with a careful attention to the living humanity that hides under the most hardened crust of individual or family selfishness. His intelligence is too vividly aware of the danger that lurks in simple solutions, to bind itself to a doctrine. However, the suggestion which emanates from his writing is active, and often audacious; not only does he prompt us to a searching compassion for all humble folk, and all victims of their own weaknesses or of the brutality of the strong; but he unveils sores,

and points out remedies; he had denounced unjust laws, a summary procedure, an unnecessarily cruel penal system; he [illegible]

foundation; there exists in him a broader Socialism of feeling and reflection.

It is a *token* of the high worth of his art, that a faith implying a conflict of the will against things as they are, and tending, in some directions at least, to narrow sympathies, [illegible]

of a delicate and, so to say, scrupulous quality His desire *for justice is not infallible, but it is sincere, and will be acknowledged* even by such as may charge the creator of the For- [illegible] nstead of seeking objectivity [illegible] nderness *of conscience. He* [illegible] with the emotion, but for which the artist's picture cannot be true. All alive with *sensibility*, his technique is that of an impressionist. Nature, the human world, characters, appear to us in intermittent and partial visions, the acuity of which is dependent on their limited objects, the mind devoting itself entirely to a single aspect of ephemeral experience. The instinct of composition, [illegible]

the social impressions create surroundings, the gestures and words of the personages organize into characters which develop but endure. This art is not even half-way to 'imagism.'

As a painter of the physical universe and of the soul, John Ga [illegible] water in [illegible] harm; an [illegible] itours, which remind one of oriental sketches, sharply distinct, and [illegible] After so many observers, he has [illegible]

is a feminine fibre in his moral nature, it would be unfair not to recognize that he has created virile figures, with robust relief. It cannot be denied, however, that he has endued the portraits of women and girls with a happy grace, or that he has treated problems of feeling by organizing them round passionate love as a centre. His heroines, ardent and spontaneous, do not show the brilliant intellectuality which Meredith has imparted to his own; and in spite of the exceptional penetration of his analyses, John Galsworthy has never aimed at the extreme complexity in which some psychologists find their crowning achievement. He is too genuinely desirous of truth to lend an artificial intensity to the stream of consciousness. In his eyes all human beings, even such as are most keenly tormented by the fevers of greed or desire, are intimately related to the animal and vegetable nature, which on all sides surrounds them, and whose obscure sympathy is like [illegible] undertone to the theme of their destiny. His [illegible] much coloured with pantheism for him to absorb the world in man. Art to him is a spell which does not stimulate individuality, but dissolves it. His personages, however particularized, ever possess something of the quality of a type.

The action of his novels is at times slackened by a dreamy mood of contemplation which in its essence is philosophical and mystic, and seizes the illusory stirrings of the universal soul in the agitations of individual beings. The elasticity of the novel has not always proved to him a favourable influence; and the stricter form of the drama may have told upon his art as a salutary constraint. Still, his technique shows a just sense of architecture; he knows how to construct a subject, distribute his masses, group his contrivances and effects. The interpretation of characters with him is rarely indirect, and dictated by the author to the reader; it spontaneously radiates from all the activities and attitudes through which the original being of each hero expresses itself. His style, eminently flexible, is readily adapted to the most diverse functions; quivering, nervous, coloured in descriptions, vigorous and suggestive in the rendering of states of consciousness, it lends itself to widely different tones, and becomes in the language of every person the indispensable instrument of the very thought to which we are listening. Impassioned as it is, it can use irony with superior success.

Concentration agrees well with John Galsworthy's talent. His short stories and impressions—things seen and etched with

By the side of those masters, the figures of lesser note are many. All attempts to class them would be in vain; the only safe inference is that there seems to be no limit to the variety of their gifts.[1]

3. *The Th*

stagnation,

tury by a s

leading one

more dramatic situations, and for a more modern technique, made itself felt at that time with already mature writers, such

[1] The novelists of the 'Kailyard School' (Ian Maclaren, G. Douglas, S. R.

as Pinero and Jones.[1] Their plays only testifiy to a v desire for renovation, and rest satisfied with a compror The influence of Ibsen, which Edmund Gosse and Ber Shaw[2] contributed to spread, more strongly directed younger writers towards the philosophical and social dra while the comedies of Oscar Wilde,[3] in a lighter vein, a solitary example of the very brilliant revival of an form.

Interpreted with ability by Gosse and Shaw, translate William Archer,[4] and brought through the latter's article the knowledge of the many, the dramatic work of I held undisputed sway for a score of years. It roused v interest, and pretty numerous imitations. The beginnin 1904, of the lease of the Court Theatre by H. Granville-Ba and Vedrenne is a landmark in the history of English lit ture. This playhouse was the centre of an active m ment of progress and experiments, the benefit of which felt both in the writing of plays conceived according to new spirit, and in the renovation of stagecraft. The dencies which thus came to the front were a regard for trut stage setting and the style of players, a more forcible re sentation of real life in plots and dialogues, and the selec of such themes as would put to the test the moral and sc traditions through which the past still controls the presen

The vitality of the English theatre, from 1890 to 191 almost entirely to be found in the often resounding, rarely popular, successes achieved by intense plays, wri in the light of that ideal. The best dramas of William Sor set Maugham, of St. John Hankin, of H. Granville-Bar are not unworthy of being studied along with those of Sh and the same influence can even be traced to some exten such comedies as Arnold Bennett's and Gilbert Cannan's

[1] Sir Arthur Pinero (1855–1934): *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, 1893; *Gay Lord Quex*, 1899; *Mid-Channel*, 1909. Henry Arthur Jones (1851–19 *Breaking a Butterfly*, 1885; *Saints and Sinners*, 1891; *Mrs. Dane's Def* 1900, etc.; *The Renascence of the English Drama*, 1895.

[2] Edmund Gosse, *Studies in the Literature of Northern Europe*, 1879; G Shaw, *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, 1891.

[3] See above, Chap. III, sect. 3.

[4] 1856–1924; dramatic critic to the *World*, 1884–1905; published wit Granville-Barker *A National Theatre, Scheme and Estimates*, 1907.

[5] William Somerset Maugham (see below, sect. 5), born 1874: *Lady Fred* 1907; *The Land of Promise*, 1914; *East of Suez*, 1922; *The Constant Wife*, 1 *Christmas Holiday*, 1939, etc. St. John Hankin (1869–1909): *The Re of the Prodigal*, 1905; *The Last of the De Mullins*, 1908, etc.; *Plays*, 2 v 1923. Harley Granville-Barker (1877–1946): *The Voysey Inherit*

marked. Already before 1914 the first symptoms

ıce of the years 1890–1910 has not ceased to prove
ealism and naturalism are still the predominant
of the more interesting writers; problem plays
nerous, and social criticism remains in the fore-
ut besides those tendencies, other have become
between the mediocrity of the conventional theatre,
ot lost the favour of the man in the street, and the
ness of the 'modern' play, the national tempera-
' various descrip-
ly of sentiment,
y humour. The
ıt to the persis-
h are too deep-
how to mingle a
t emotion which
ı simplicity and
in ways which remind one either of Maeterlinck,
ussian drama. Spontaneous and sincere as they
elements are mixed by a very conscious artistic
which a shade of artificiality can be traced. Still,

---

907. Arnold Benrett (see above, sect. 2): *Milestones*, 1912;
enture, 1913, etc. Gilbert Cannan (see below, sect. 5): *Four
ten Plays*, 1923.
Chap III, sect. 4.
sect 2; *The Admirable Crichton*, 1903, *Peter Pan*, 1904; *A Kiss*
1916; *Dear Brutus*, 1917; *Mary Rose*, 1920, *Shall we join the
The Boy David*, 1938.

the sadness of a world which ghosts will not henceforth cease to haunt.

Meanwhile, the drama in verse, which several attempts had tried to call to life again since the time of Tennyson and Browning, was winning on the stage victories significant enough to create, on several occasions, an impression that the prose of language and of themes was suffering decisive repulses. Stephen Phillips's *Paolo and Francesca* was hailed as a masterpiece; its lyricism has kept a Romantic, elaborate beauty; but the combined imitations of Elizabethan intensity and Greek soberness are no compensation for the lack of dramatic life.[1] Since then, that vein has not ceased to produce works of unequal merit; and the historical tragedies of John Drinkwater and John Masefield, whatever may be their weaknesses, have realized effects of undeniable power. But with them the drama in verse appeals to the national consciousness; and its spirit draws nearer a popular, not a scholarly inspiration.

However, the most accomplished plays of the present day, and the movements which seem most hopeful, are connected with that revival of drama under the stress of social criticism, the most brilliant representative of which was Shaw in the previous generation. The theatre of John Galsworthy[2] is not a compromise; it is a supple and fine adaptation of the philosophical type to the concrete necessities of the stage. Each play is built on a frame of ideas; but these are not put in from the outside; such situations are selected as will, through their spontaneous development, suggest to our minds the terms between which an abstract relation may be established. This notion of the problem drama is the healthiest; John Galsworthy claims not to follow any other; and he has most often succeeded in keeping to it. The picture which he has drawn of the conflicts of forces or feelings, from which a susceptible conscience will realize the complex nature of duty, preserve

[1] Stephen Phillips (1865–1915): *Paolo and Francesca*, 1899; *Herod*, 1900; *The Sin of David*, 1904; *Nero*, 1906; etc. Laurence Binyon (1869–1943), *Attila*. John Drinkwater (1882–1937): *Abraham Lincoln*, 1918; *Mary Stuart*, 1921; *Cromwell*, 1923; *Plays*, 1 vol., 1928.

[2] See above, sect. 2. *Plays*, vol. i (*The Silver Box*, *Joy*, *Strife*), 1909; *Justice*, 1910; *The Little Dream*, 1911; *The Pigeon*, 1912; *The Eldest Son*, 1912; *The Fugitive*, 1913; *The Mob*, 1914; *A Bit of Love*, 1915; *The Foundations*, 1917; *The Skin-Game*, 1920; *Loyalties*, 1922; *Old English*, 1924; *Escape*, 1926, etc.; *The Roof*, 1929; *The Plays of John Galsworthy*, 1 vol., 1929. See study by Skemp, 'The Plays of Mr. John Galsworthy' (*Essays by Members of the English Association*, vol. iv, 1913); W. L. Phelps, *Essays on Modern Dramatists*, 1921; R. H. Coats, *John Galsworthy as a Dramatic Artist*, 1926.

essential elements, the plots proceed with more energy. The dialogues keep half-way between the mere photography of familiar conversation, and the conventional language of the stage. Vivacious, strong, soberly moving, these dramatic

vith a very sure realism;
be unexceptionable, if
ncing, or if the action,
imes seem a little thin.
' revival and the demo-

cratic spirit are prompting some very interesting attempts The Manchester Repertory Theatre has sought in the dialect and the humour of Lancashire a popular inspiration, which feeds a series of original works.[1] The vigorous talent of John Masefield[2] has drawn from an analogous source. The 'pageant' movement seems hardly so far to have produced more than a wider revival of dramatic and historical curiosity;

given
which
In the
'e; this

aims at a renewal of formulae by means of a frankly social realism, and appeals to the memories of the national or provincial past, in the form in which they are accepted and

It is not pos-
will succeed
, bespeak, as

in several other fields, a resolve to impose man's will upon nature, which is itself probably the sign of a natural energy, and for this very reason would justify much hopefulness.

In the drama, no less than in the novel, the most active

[1] Stanley Houghton, Gilbert Cannan, Harold Brighouse, Miss Sowerby, etc.
[2] See below, sect. 4. *The Tragedy of Nan*, 1909, etc.

influence to-day is that of the Russian example. The confessed indebtedness of some playwrights to the optics of the picture palace testifies, like the breaking up of a construction and the discontinuous style with novelists, to a fatigue of logical attention, and also to the search for subtle new effects, through amorphous and spontaneous suggestions.[1]

4. *Poetry.*—The first few years of the twentieth century seemed to show a decline in the vitality of English poetry. Swinburne and Meredith were approaching the end of their careers; Hardy and Kipling, still in the fullness of their vigour, belonged to the present, but not to the future. The symbolist and decadent movement was losing ground. John Davidson and Arthur Symons[2] had produced their best work. That of Francis Thompson was going to be prematurely cut short. While the reaction against the Victorian ideal was in full swing, and the younger men would show coldness or disrespect to the memory of Tennyson, no strong new inspiration was forthcoming. The best-known poets of the hour were seeking for models, either, like Austin and Blunt, in the forcible careless Romanticism of Byron; or, on the contrary, like Watts-Dunton, Gosse, Bridges, Watson, in a chastened purity of form, a delicate learned classicism, where the tradition of the preceding age mingled with the influence of the French 'Parnasse.' With both groups, the instinct of renovation was not inactive; poets were feeling their way, through unadorned simplicity or elaborate refinement; but their efforts were not backed by a sufficiently strong originality; and however just in various ways their intuitions might be, their art, even in its most brilliant or elegant achievements, suffered from a touch of uncertainty, or of the academic manner. There was in all this no fresh running spring.[3]

[1] For the connection of this tendency with German 'expressionism,' see Ashley Dukes, *The Youngest Drama*, 1823; and E. Rose, *Gordon Craig and the Theatre*, 1932. Recently, interesting attempts have been made at a fusion of a racy realism with symbolical significance, by Sean O'Casey (*The Plough and the Stars*, 1926; *Within the Gates*, 1933); Denis Johnston (*The Moon in the Yellow River*, 1932; *Storm Song*, *A Bride for the Unicorn*, 1935); and Noel Coward (*Cavalcade*, 1932).

[2] See the study by T. Earle Welby, 1925.

[3] Alfred Austin (1835–1913), poet laureate on the death of Tennyson. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1840–1922): *Poetical Works*, 1915; *Last Poems*, 1922; Theodore Watts-Dunton (1836–1914): *The Coming of Love*, 1897. Edmund Gosse (1849–1928), eminent critic, published among other collections of verse, *New Poems*, 1879; *In Russet and Silver*, 1894; *The Autumn Garden*, 1908. Robert Bridges (1844–1930), poet laureate on the death of A. Austin, critic and metrist, etc.: *The Growth of Love*, 1889; *The Testament of Beauty*, 1929; *Shorter Poems, etc.*, 1931; *Poetical Works*, 1936; see studies by F. E. Brett Young, 1914;

There was none either in artists at least as much inspired, but whose works, possibly owing to their very distinction, lacked all wide appeal: Housman, Trench, Doughty, Mrs. Woods. The first, in a single collection of meditated and finished pieces, has given a concentrated expression to a melancholy not unlike Hardy's; with the second, gifts of the

[illegible]

did not care to profess a doctrine. They created, and followed the bent of their natures. Their notion of poetry is in their work. When probed, this reveals two main tendencies, both not new. Some look for beauty to a purification of experience,

[illegible]

easiness which the excessive search for elaborate perfection,

---

by E. Thompson, 1944; and T. M. Kelshall, 1924. Sir William Watson (1858–1935): *Wordsworth's Grave*, 1889; *The Man who saw*, 1917; *Poems Brief and New*, 1925; *The Yesterdays and the Morrows*, 1934; *Poems of Sir William Watson, 1878–1935*, 1936.

[illegible] *A Shropshire Lad*, 1896; *Collected* [illegible] s, 1924. Charles [illegible] *n Arabia Deserta*, [illegible] *The Cliffs*, 1909, [illegible] Hogarth, 1928, [illegible] *Collected Poems*, [illegible] 2 vols., 1910, 3rd vol., 1920,

and the attempts of artificial idealism, had laid deep in their sensibilities, by means of a vehement effort towards a direct, simple utterance. They look to familiar, concrete subjects, and to spontaneous language and prosody, for the virtue of those immediate effusions in which literature at periodic intervals tries to refresh itself.

The whole endeavour of this group thus shows, in theory, no distinctly original feature. Their aesthetic aims remind one of those of the preceding period; or more often, beyond the concentrated discipline of the Victorian age, they fall back upon the liberating example of Blake and Wordsworth. In this deeper sense, they really continued the new Romanticism, the principle of which they but more broadly put into practice. They, too, attempt to remedy the stiffening of an art grown mechanical, by means of the loosening of the soul's set habits; they, too, want to recover the virgin freshness of the sense of reality, and load the most spontaneous language with a spiritual force, which exceeds the explicit strength of intense words. Once more, we thus have here one of those 'returns to nature' which betoken a resolve to reach a more intact plane of the inner life. However, these writers are distinguished by characteristics which are their own, being derived from the necessarily unique temper of their age. Their aspiration to reality is more courageous, bolder or more violent; their humanitarian feeling is strengthened by the progress of social consciousness. They carry within themselves the memory of the century of artistic life which has elapsed since Wordsworth's time. And while they practise the same gospel, they have an intuition of the commonplace which threatens them in this direction as well. More definitely warned by the experience of the intervening years, their effort is more uncompromising; they exceed the degree of simplicity, of naturalness, of direct realism, where Wordsworth had stopped: they equal the audacity of Blake, who had advanced, at one stroke, as far as the future was to go; but they are free from his mystic terrors, and their inspiration, less divinely puerile, enjoys a more supple and careless youth.

The faith with which these poets are instinct is thus not without precedents; but actual practice is all in art; and the genuineness of their gifts lend the quality of an initiative to their work. On the eve of the War their group had risen in stature, and they were beginning to fulfil their promise. They went through the storm of the War, in which one of them

lost his life; and their generation reached its final growth. It thus appeared that they can lay claim to a high order of merit, but that none belongs to the class of masters who dominate a literary age. With the advent of a new poetic

on the other the independent curiosities of young England which he shared. The British heart has accepted him for its own; the fine seriousness of his last poems, inspired by the War,

[1] See above, sect 3 Selected Poems, by John Drinkwater, 1922

adequate instrument, a popular language, a faithful adherence to the tone of conversation, which goes beyond Wordsworth, and a free verse, voluntarily shorn of all regular measure. When he returns to rhyme, he reaches a more poetical and rare suggestiveness, without losing the realistic flavour of his utterance. David Herbert Lawrence, the most harshly vigorous of those writers, in verse as in prose, has turned symbolism to new uses in producing effects of concentrated passion; he has loaded reassuring familiar words with a sensuous ardour which wells up like an obscure flow of lava from what they tell and from what they leave unsaid.

John Masefield, who more than them all has the gift of facile energy, is probably the central figure of this group. His verbal inventiveness is abundant and racy; the movement, the sweep of his verse at first arrest the reader, create the impression of a manner less original, more largely reminiscent of Romantic eloquence; but his nerve, his power of concrete imagining, his broad virile sense of frank realities, belong indeed to his own time; and his joy in words is tempered by a secret sense of dissatisfaction with the hindrance which language places in the way of expression. He feels with Kipling the intoxication of physical effort and of the sea; with Whitman, that of simple fraternities; and still, he shows a power of intellectual concentration and of meditative harmonies. The animation of his work, lyrical, dramatic, or narrative, the variety of his rhythms, the ease and direct vigour of his style, would secure him what his competitors lack, greatness, if he done more than try his hand at various *genres*, without fully realizing himself in any. Lastly, Harold Monro, whose inspiration is not free either from literary reminiscences, has also a personal temperament; he strikes fine, airy chords, in which quiver the pensive sensibilities of our time; the remembrance of Shelley's poignant melodies, of Keats's sumptuousness, lingers in his lines; but the quality as of old age, which this memory assumes from the intervening century of intense life, mingles with an acutely conscious youth, that of a soul eagerly bent on drawing fresh stimulation from the springs of elementary experience.[1]

[1] Thomas Sturge Moore (1870–1946), critic and poet: *Art and Life*, 1910; *The Sicilian Idyll, etc.*, 1911; *Danae*, 1903, etc.; *Collected Poems*, 4 vols., 1931–3. Lascelles Abercrombie (1881–1938), poet and critic: *Poems* (Oxford Poets), 1930; *Romanticism*, 1926, etc. James Elroy Flecker (1884–1915); *Collected Poems*, 1935, etc.: see studies by D. Goldring, 1922 and G. L. Hodgson, 1925. Victoria Sackville-West, born in 1892, poet and novelist: *Orchard and Vine-*

The poets of the First German War are a group apart . . .

. . . h a great love . . . utterances in . . . heroism and energy, receive unreserved expression, and are self-sufficient. Fewer still are the words of hatred. The main themes are resignation, suffering, bitterness, and the impassioned return of the soul to dear memories.[1] This spirit of moral rebellion remains alive at the heart of an inspiration now serene, but still astir with the emotion of an unforgettable spiritual drama, in the work of an Edmund Blunden, a Herbert Read [1]

With the passing of time the poets of that war can already be seen in a clearer perspective. It seems safe to say that among them Sassoon and Owen are surest to live. The former has concentrated a bitter realism and a vengeful

---

yard, 1921; *The Land*, 1926, etc.; *Collected Poems*, 1933 Rupert Brooke (1887–1915); *Collected, Poems*, 1918. William H Davies (1871–1940)·

1926, etc.

irony into short terse pieces. The latter promised to be link in the great poetic tradition to which Keats belong His pictures of the passion of martyred man have an extr ordinarily evocative power; their stark truth is shot throug and glorified with a pathetic symbolism. His brief, forcef phrasing, the strict bounds within which his vigour is kep and his felicitous experiments in a new metrical scheme, th of assonances, have given him a claim to be regarded as the master by the poets who call themselves 'modern.'

Immediately after the War, the imagist movement, whic had just preceded it, was the predominant influence. It no belongs to the past, but has left a mark upon literature. Th doctrine of the imagists can be definitely stated. It is r lated to tendencies then active in other domains—the nove the stage [1]—and in other countries: America, France, for e ample. Its principle was to push the search for spontaneou ness and immediacy up to the point where the obtrusion interpreting and constructive thought has not yet succeede in making itself felt. The materials of art will thus be in th rough data of mental life—'images,' or complex and insta taneous bundles of intellectual and emotional perception To present them without deforming them, with untouche freshness and vigour, is to offer the most direct and mos certainly efficacious suggestions to the mind of the reade The actual impact of reality is thus transmitted to us, wit such force that the tyranny of practical life is vanquishe and for a moment we escape its demands. A writer, the ima gists believe, should avoid all abstraction, and every arch tectural attempt; so he must be very sparing in his use language, restricting his notations to indispensable element and he must grant measures and cadences of all sorts the full value—not secondary, but essential—in the elaboratio of the total effect.[2] This method is easily recognizable one more expression of the needs which were producing, a the same time, a discontinuous style, a return to elementar

[1] See above, sects. 2 and 3.

[2] For this movement, see the works of Richard Aldington, born in 189 *Images Old and New*, 1915; *Images of War*, 1919; *Images of Desire*, 191 *Collected Poems*, 1929, 1934, etc.; see T. McGreevy, *Richard Aldington*, 193 Mrs. Aldington ('H.D.'): *Garden*, 1916, etc. F. S. Flint: *Cadences*, 1915, e Aldous Huxley: *The Defeat of Youth, etc.*, 1918; *Leda*, 1920, etc. Collectio of verse: *The Imagists*, 1914; *Some Imagist Poets*, 1915, 1916, 1917; the revie *The Egoist*, 1914, etc. For independent attempts at the free play of associ tions upon fanciful, ironical, or satirical themes, see the works of E., O., and Sitwell (*The Collected Poems of Edith Sitwell*, 1930; *The Collected Satires a Poems of Osbert Sitwell*, 1931, etc.); and of Ruth Pitter (*A Mad Lady's Garla* 1934; *A Trophy of Arms*, 1936, etc.) See Glenn Hughes, *Imagism and t Imagists*, 1931.

values, in various kinds of literature, and of the pictorial or musical arts; needs which are shared in equally by the refined or jaded sensibilities of old nations, and by young America[1] English imagism was a sign, at the same time, of the decomposition and analysis towards which, on many planes, instincts of aesthetic renovation seemed to converge; and of the gradual rise of an international artistic movement, no longer simply through contagious influences and fashions, but under the stress of an interior development.[2]

5. *The Recent Years.*—The time has not come yet to try and discern—still less to study—the actual consequences of the First German War in the field of English literature. The years that have elapsed, however, now allow of some tentative conclusions. But what the effect of the new conflict, from which the world is only emerging at present (1946), may be in the near future, and in what way its impact will tell on the relative order that six years ago seemed to be again evolving from chaos, is a topic which cannot yet even be touched upon, however cautiously. The following remarks are thus subject, more than they were before, to the doubt that is inseparable from all tentative speculations of that kind.

Literary development, here again, seems controlled both by the inner needs of the national minds, and by circumstances. The greatest event in the modern era—a disturbing factor of unparalleled magnitude—has interfered in proportion with the normal course of intellectual history No one [illegible] e, [illegible] n-

In the natural play of the tendency to rhythmic change,

[1] See the works of Ezra Pound, etc [illegible]

there would have appeared, before the second quarter of the twentieth century, a phase of relative equilibrium and order, characterized by the ascendancy of such artistic demands as one associates with classicism. Not a few signs, on the eve of the War, seemed to point that way. Such symptoms did not vanish in the course of the upheaval; they can even be said to have grown more distinct.[1] But on the other hand, from the shock of the event itself, from the moral doubts which it stirred, from the unrest which the whole life of Europe has not ceased to feel, aspirations sprang up or grew that were opposed in their aim to the former ones. They strike one more, at the first glance; from them, present-day developments assume their leading features. The aspect of the post-War period, in English literature, is that of an unsettled time, labouring with a variety of impulses, and divided against itself. In spite of that confusion, two main groups of writers can be distinguished.

On the one hand would be those who answered more or less definitely to the expectation and the desire of a neo-classical order; writers guided by an ideal of clear thinking, of a scrupulous technique, and of a balanced manner. They try to find out, with the help of criticism, such stable values as life and art, in spite of all, may still offer; their wish is to reach permanency of utterance through the power of meditation and of style. Their attempts have often met with fair, occasionally

[1] There were signs, after 1920, to support the conjecture that a transition was begun, carrying the British mind towards a period similar to what was and still is, in France, the rational neo-classicism, tending to come forward through the confusions of schools and groups. Such signs were: the persistence in a very active state, among all the varieties of contemporary poetry, of an inspiration not indeed academic, but classical, through the stressing of ancient values, and through the condensation and elaboration of form; next, the place still held, in the universal disorder of minds, by the desire for a moral and social balance founded on a more scientific organization of life, and that effort of intelligence which is still a leading trait of young England; the coming back in strength of philosophical rationalism, in a tempered and more supple form it is true, with the 'neo-realists' (see above, Chap. II, sect. 1); the success of critical works instinct with a purpose of uncompromising lucidity, like those of Lytton Strachey, T. S. Eliot, etc.; the revival of a genuine interest in the literature and thought of the Restoration and the eighteenth century; lastly, the characteristics of some significant writers, among the younger novelists and poets: a Rose Macaulay, a Rebecca West, an E. M. Forster, an F. S. Flint, an Edmund Blunden, an Aldous Huxley. But there never was more than a partial convergence—indeed, a virtual one—between those efforts; and no movement of art and thought has so far resulted from them. More recently, the fact that the predominant trend in general philosophy, as illustrated by A. N. Whitehead (*Science and the Modern World*, 1926, etc.), has been away from the scientific rationalism of the nineteenth century, would confirm an impression that those tendencies have not come to a head.

with distinguished, or even eminent success; but the doom that besets our century has so far thwarted the fulfilment of their dream—that of perfection clothed in serenity and intelligence. The Romantic fever still glows in their veins; it quickens their sensibility, sharpens their irony or exasperates it; they do not possess their souls in patience, and so, their creations can hardly bear the genuine stamp of mental poise. At the same time, those writers remain individual in their temperaments and their tenets; and while they offer common characteristics, they are also, in various degrees, instinct with tendencies directly opposed to their main artistic intent.

[illegible]

any one else, the ironical disrespect of the twentieth century towards the Victorian age, charged with smug sentimentality and half-voluntary purblindness. Strachey's work, short as [illegible]

Huxley's[2] personality. His is a supple, many-sided talent, [illegible]

[illegible] a critic of literature and [illegible] Characters, [illegible] shed poetry [illegible] udies, 1927, [illegible] wo or Three [illegible] Point, 1928 [illegible] a generally [illegible] v a Summer,

he has allowed his witty, but fac
drifting age such scope, that the n
owes him some of its most telling c
work would remain more brilliant th
did not the strength of an origina
here and there, in tones of bitterne
tenor of satire and paradox.

With T. S. Eliot[1] the bent towarc
aesthetic doctrine and a rule of life,
His robust personality has been si
commanding presence in literature.
his thought the secret interrelatio
disciples of order, one with the ot
The poet in him, who clothed a pl
the most audaciously modern garb,
critic, who longs for the setting up o
and by the religious and ethical thi
moral health but in some traditiona
belief. Again, Lascelles Abercrom
has displayed a vigorous impassione
musings and his dramas; his languag
than it is strong, his visions, as clear-
intellectual eagerness, the hold whi
terranean past have upon him, po
family of minds; those which, in sp
of our time, are drawn by the magn
by the prestige of ancient models.

With the same group one should
note, who during the last thirty ye
works, in which the artistic method w
but the common feature of which
need of all drastic change. Most of
themselves to a cult of tradition i
craving for truth or emotion in for
taste is at no pains to accept, or w
through frequent use. Norman

[1] Born in the United States; a poet: *The*
1935, 1936; a literary critic and ethical th
Homage to John Dryden, 1924; *Elizabethan Es*

cosmopolitan culture, has written clever stories, where irony flashes in a finely polished style. Somerset Maugham,[1] an able imitator of naturalism in his dramas, has since known, in his novels and tales, how to handle no less deftly the fresh thrills of exoticism and of the new psychology; a master in narrative, an expert painter of landscapes and souls, he offers [illegible]

elaborate stories, where conflicts of character and intellectual problems are worked out, and expressed in a pellucid style, [illegible] ined books [illegible] to create, [illegible]

[1] [illegible]

[illegible]

But the outstanding figure among those story-tellers, in the originality and perfection of her manner, is a woman, Katherine Mansfield.[1] Her sparing, scrupulous art is at one with the deepest classical tradition; at the same time it quivers with the keen emotions, the unrest of our age, in rich vibrations the more moving for their restraint. As a writer she had her heroes, and felt influences: those of Colette, Proust, Tchekhov most of all; but properly speaking she was a disciple to no one, and her mastery in the field of the short tale grew through the progress of a wonderfully unerring intuition, both aesthetic and critical. Katherine Mansfield discovered, after so many others, the kingdom of the unexpressed; and she owed to fate, along with her exquisite gift, a priceless boon—the freshness of an unblemished perception, of an imagination unimpoverished, unspoilt by bookish knowledge and book words. Her method is fully conscious and purely instinctive. She selects the significant moments when the light of common experience shines through characters, making them transparent; she then lets them live, act, speak according to an inner law which convinces us, so that both their past and their future shape themselves forth before us, from the stuff of their remembrance or of their subconscious brooding. Those characters are not revealed to us from the outside; they reveal themselves, as the play of their natural reactions, under the magic influence of a sovereign simple art, endows us with a subtle divination of their souls. There never was more eloquence in merely virtual expression; Jane Austen did possess that easy command over things withheld, but with her the clear realization of the cruelty of life and the diversity of creatures, being refined and limited by convention, remained more calm and acted less powerfully on our hearts. In Katherine Mansfield's stories the background—whether it be landscapes, social surroundings, or episodes—is called up with an impressionistic touch, laid on no less vigorously than

---

1939); *John Cornelius*, 1937, etc. Mary Webb (1883–1928), a novelist: *Precious Bane*, 1924, etc. Rebecca West (born 1893), a novelist and critic: *The Return of the Soldier*, 1918; *The Thinking Reed*, 1936, etc.

[1] Kathleen Beauchamp, born in New Zealand, 1889, married the English critic, J. Middleton Murry, and died at Fontainebleau in 1923; she wrote short stories: *Bliss, etc.*, 1920; *The Garden Party, etc.*, 1922; *The Dove's Nest, etc.*, 1923; and poems, *Poems*, 1930. See *Journal of Katherine Mansfield*, 1927; *The Letters of Katherine Mansfield*, 2 vols., 1928; R. E. Mantz and J. M. Murry, *The Life of Katherine Mansfield*, 1833; A. Maurois, *Magiciens et Logiciens*, 1935; M. L. Muffang, *Katherine Mansfield, sa vie, son œuvre, sa personnalité*, 1936.

soberly. Her language, swayed by the hard imperious craving for the perfect phrase, reaches the quality of the inevitable through an instinct for the essential, and an absolute honesty of statement. To those traits should be added a witty fancy, a deep, tender, and humorous insight into children and animals; and the supreme virtue of those stories is their truth, wonderful, unexpected, fresh, and poignant. Ever in

[illegible]

writer's personality is revealed, with her unique straightforwardness and candour, with her courageous clearsightedness, are certain to rank with the autobiographies that live.

Other writers, on the contrary, have fulfilled themselves

[illegible]

delivering of a strange message; James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, have followed very far, over dangerous paths, the cherished dream of an uncompromising artistic truth.

D. H. Lawrence[1] has not been a creator of forms. His originality was content to use with impatient vigour such instruments as he found ready to his hand His novels, the realism of which is all stirred by a longing for symbolical suggestion, will glow now and again with poetic ardours; but their informing thought is not strong enough, nor is their structure sufficiently firm, to check a tendency to diffusion

[illegible]

and disorder; their method of insistence and repetition is somewhat over-emphatic and heavy. The short stories, which develop within stricter limits, are better built. Lawrence's poems, openly free in their metre and often irreducible to any precise pattern, hold us through their graphic power, their poignancy, their naked sincerity. But it would be futile to try and lay the chief stress upon the artist in him; the artist in him is neither very great nor of the finest quality; Lawrence indeed would not rank so high as he does, but for the sombre enthusiasm that raises him above his own self. Nor is his teaching other than a disappointment to those who expect from it an answer to the anxieties of our age. One cannot take very seriously a dislike for modern civilization that harks back to the simplest modes of life, without finding in them any genuine refreshment; a thirst for the untried and the exotic which every satisfaction leaves unslaked and embittered; a scepticism enamoured of vague mystic imaginings; a religion of physical love shot through and through with the consciousness of its fragility. Nevertheless, owing to that very anarchy of purpose, to those wild outbursts of despair as much as of desire, Lawrence's work is among those in which the men and women of our time have found their own restlessness most accurately mirrored; and however unequal, feverish, and morbid that work may be, it possesses an energy of impassioned imagination which stamps it with the characteristic marks of greatness. His books will probably owe their lasting interest to the rich significant confession of his tragic spiritual fate; they will live, moreover, in a series of beautiful fragments; close grim pictures of miners' or peasants' homes, scenes of English provincial life; studies of unsettled sensibilities, of crises in adolescence; images of distant lands of sunshine and death; unforgettable outpourings of the solitary or the enslaved soul. The next age may find in them a type of the chaos, rather than of the moral liberation, of ours; and a clear testimony to the active presence of the new psychology in the intellectual background of the last twenty years; Lawrence intuitively discovered that doctrine as much as he became acquainted with it in the usual way, and the sense of a dark edge to the lights of the inner world is conspicuous through all his utterances, setting off each phrase with a depth and a shadow.

No less tormented is the literary figure of James Joyce,[1]

[1] James Joyce (1882–1941), born in Dublin, attended a Roman Catholic seminary, next studied medicine, taught languages on the Continent, before he

nd in his work: the obsession of the soul's secret life is no ss unescapable. But the value of that work lies chiefly in he astonishing creative fo[illegible]
ge f[illegible]
o bre[illegible]
osses[illegible]
angu[illegible], which again, when that freedom was won, tried to xpress the subconscious in terms of new aesthetic laws, that ooked very much like lawlessness itself. Joyce's first writ-ngs are of interest only to the historian or biographer; his owing graceful poems, his Irish short stories (*Dubliners*), re-narkably good as they are, do not yet point the way to his evolutionary departures. These are only adumbrated in the utobiography (*Portrait of the Artist*) where in a pathetic con-ession the revolt of a young being that has not yet found imself, and his response to the call of life, are depicted. The training for innovation with which Joyce's name is associated ould be summed up in a single book, *Ulysses*, with a fullness nd a boldness which seemed to have reached their limit, ntil *Anna Livia Plurabelle* was published...

The time has not yet come to weigh those experiments and alue them. One may perhaps, however, refuse to follow the uthor, with that last work, as far as the invention of a purely rtificial language, which can but destroy the very conditions f literary expression. *Ulysses* is the powerful, confused syn-hesis of all the mental disturbance, and all the quest for new orms, that stirred in post-War literature. Previous move-nents, methods, and styles are there pushed further, with etermined, unique uncompromisingness. An attempt is nade to turn the spontaneous, untouched flow of images in he consciousness into the very substance of that unceasing nalysis of the human mind, which had from the first been he aim of the novel, and to which, with Meredith, Henry ames, and Proust, it had applied itself more resolutely. The ninterrupted brooding of our dimmer mental life is rendered hrough the medium best fitted for that task—monologue, hich from the time of Robert Browning had been drawing

[illegible]

nearer to the immediate intuitive elements of thought. Th
inextricable network of reality, the chaos of human experi
ence, are represented by a series of episodes, not connecte
logically and yet convincing. The narratives, the dialogues
the day-dreams, the descriptions, the fanciful reflections of
detached observer, are combined into a paradoxical and sym
bolical medley. From the depths of consciousness the inex
pressible things and the tabooed words surge up; and the
show themselves, or are uttered, with some reserve still, wit
a last shred of reticence, which only the Lawrence of *Lad
Chatterley* was to tear away. Such an undertaking, no doub
is a landmark. That it should prove no less significant i
itself, as a work of art, is far from certain. It will remain
lesson, and perhaps a warning; a more positive immortalit
it might not know. The ways it has opened will be followe
by other writers, towards more definite, better balance
forms.

One cannot help believing that the novels of Mrs. Woolf,
even if they were to be an isolated portent, will experience
fuller survival. Their audacity is combined with an infinit
seduction; the danger that lurks in them is no less subtle tha
themselves; and their charm might allay the verdict of tha
deeper taste which never wanders for long from a certai
mean or measure in art. Measure indeed, a judgment fin
and just as much as penetrating, an intelligence as sharp a
steel and yet not needlessly cruel, the clear analysis of slende
and almost immaterial data—such classical merits, enriche
by the most modern intuition, are displayed by Mrs Wool
in her literary or social essays. It is through a deliberat
process, by gradual stages, that she worked out a boldly nev
artistic form. In their completed originality, her novels ar
impressionistic renderings of the infinitely small and infinitel
transient elements, out of which the web of our daily experi
ence is woven. The plot is quite simple, cut down to a mini
mum of facts, and these again almost entirely internal: whil
a tragic doom, and death, are not absent, we see but thei

[1] Mrs. Virginia Woolf (1882–1941), the daughter of Leslie Stephen, pub
lished novels: *The Voyage Out*, 1915; *Night and Day*, 1919; *Jacob's Room*, 192
Mrs. Dalloway, 1925; *To the Lighthouse*, 1927; *Orlando*, 1928; *The Waves*, 193
Flush, 1933; *The Years*, 1937; essays in criticism of literature or manner
The Common Reader, 1st series, 1925, 2nd series, 1932; *A Room of One's Ow*
1929; *Three Guineas*, 1938; *Between the Acts*, 1941; *The Death of the Moth*, 194
etc. See F. Delattre, *Le Roman psychologique de Virginia Woolf*, 193
Winifred Holtby, *Virginia Woolf*, 1932; Ruth Gruber, *Virginia Woolf, etc*
1935.

shadow and reflection, never directly themselves. Those events, like all human happenings, owe their reality to the stir which they awake in the several conscious beings whom they reach; and the history of a set of men and women is that of the interrelated influences which each of them casts over all. *Thus turned into a manifold and shifting thing*, personality gets diffused and tends to vanish; it carries within itself that mystery, time, and that miracle, memory; from the past that sleeps in the dim depths there will rise wonderful reviving images, and the illusory sense of the present melts [illegible]

[illegible] subconscious expresses itself in a flowing and free style, quite untrammelled, *either by the hard and fast types of logical* thought, or by the ready-made patterns of speech. Light and immaterial as they are, the artist's touches are gathered and fused into unstable compounds; one dab of the brush, *put down near* another, is bathed in its radiance, and steeped by it, but united to it only by the fragile link of that magnetism. Mental life is to each being a passiveness suffused with a sense of wonder, and records in itself a half-articulate *sort of speech*—*the* undertoned soliloquy of thought at its incipient stage. Thus this method is here by no means artificial; it answers to the distinctive quality of inward experience, and inward experience is the only matter of the novel as of life.

[illegible] mentary centres of consciousness, and the relative permanence *without which there* are no characters worthy of the name shows a tendency to disappear. Only through a display of exceptional cleverness has Mrs. Woolf been able to keep up, in the writing of ephemeral reality, *genuine centres of reactions*, several of which are substantial *enough to rouse* in us the sense of a common humanity. Among these some—

especially women—are figures convincingly and poignantly individual.[1]

It would thus appear that the creative activity of recent English literature was contained before all within the limits of the novel; while the English novel remained the most supple artistic form; indeed, if anything, more fluid than ever it was. Of the characteristics which it had assumed during the preceding years, the larger number have not ceased to be prominent: a more objective realism, an outspoken frankness in the description of a passion, a bold social criticism, the free discussion of all problems. It thus draws its matter from the most diverse sources. But besides, the ideal of a more firm construction, towards which the age of Hardy had striven in the light of the French example, seems to have been given up. On this point, another foreign influence has replaced that of Flaubert. The more concrete and, so to say, instantaneous art of the Russian novelists has offered English writers a model better adapted to their instincts; and what Tchekhov was gaining Maupassant had to lose.

This movement is, as it were, a return to a national preference, whose sway a generation of writers had endeavoured to resist, most often in vain; one seems to perceive in the change the recoil from a constraint which had visibly been weighing upon many works. But the genuine causes of the reaction which modified the very ideal of fictitious writing, were deeper. This reaction was already growing apparent during the first

[1] With this latter group should be classed writers who, in various ways, evince a restlessness marked enough to stamp their work with the characteristics of instability; who must needs devise new forms, under the strain, most often, of mental uneasiness: Richard Aldington (born 1892); for his poetry, see above, Chap. V, sect. 4; has published novels: *Death of a Hero*, 1929; *All Men are Enemies*, 1933; *Rejected Guest*, 1939, etc. Clemence Dane (Winifred Ashton), a dramatist and novelist: *Regiment of Women*, 1917; *Legend*, 1919; *Broome Stages*, 1931; *The Moon is Feminine*, 1938; *The Arrogant History of White Ben*, 1939, etc. Rosamond Lehmann, a novelist: *Dusty Answer*, 1927; *Invitation to the Waltz*, 1932; *The Weather in the Streets*, 1936, etc. Wyndham Lewis, born in the United States, has published novels: *Tarr*, 1918, etc.; short stories: *The Apes of God*, 1931; *The Mysterious Mr. Bull*, 1938, etc. Dorothy Richardson, a distinguished representative of the 'stream of consciousness' novel: *Pointed Roofs*, 1915; *Backwater*, 1916; *Honeycomb*, 1917; *Revolving Lights*, 1923; *Oberland*, 1927; *Dawn's Left Hand*, 1931; *Clear Horizon*, 1935; *Dimple Hill*, 1938 (collected under title of *Pilgrimage*, 4 vols., 1938). A resolute break with old form, a will to shape new moulds for an inspiration in all respects revolutionary, are also essential features of some recent poets, whose work seems to possess lasting value. The meaning of each piece is an expanding force which grows upon the reader through a process in which symbols are released, allusions acquire transparence, and echoes become audible. For the 'modern' poets and writers in general, see below.

y more definitely continues that of yesterday. It
as viewed in far the greater number of interesting
nstinct with a mood of revolt against the existing order
and of facts. Already in the years before the War
evincing a tendency to pessimism. Its criticism of
lues, in spite of a diffused humanitarianism, is more
than substantial; it destroys established hierarchies
ore than it sets up new ones. Its central endeavour
be a strong determination to be sincere, which will run
of being brutal or cruel, provided it can thus be fruitfu
hat the problem of the relations between the sexes
under all its aspects, with a candour which utterl
the reserve of Victorian respectability. The desi
cute, uncompromising analysis, able to seize upon a
ior secrets of the soul, is more and more conspicuou
ence of Henry James had directed novelists toward
hology of the relative; as Browning had done in h
ues, they sought to suppress themselves in the
o show us the world exclusively through the eyes o
racters, and from the point of view of each. To-da
ch for the implicit and the profound reaches the sub
s. Even though this word is not mentioned, and th
theory is not explicitly appealed to, everything take
the works of many as if obscure desires, unsuspecte
, were from their dark recesses guiding the clea
the will and the acts of responsible beings.

characteristics, however, are far from universal. T
us classes of the reading public, according to tempera
ocial ranks, and even ages, different styles will corre
The contemporary novel, leaving out the writers wh
ous to open the way to the future, offers all the rang
ore traditional or reassuring tones; and the sensationa
ive novel, the novel of adventure, the novel of humour
imental novel, the novel of fashionable life, sti
oof of a vitality which at times rises to the level o
on.

esent phase, therefore, cannot be classed under on
eadline; it derives neither from classicism, nor from
cism; or rather, it derives from both.

among the efforts of yesterday—such as the poetry o
ists, the manner of Joyce or Mrs. Woolf—are plainl
from neo-Romanticism, the inner principle of whic
n to extend as far as to exhaust it. They complet

the break-up, no longer unconscious, but voluntary, of all logical bonds; they achieve the victory of *spontaneous discontinuity* over all thought-out construction, and thus of feeling or instinct over reason; they found their claims on the

...e rough data of per-

...s worked out by the

that evolution of art

and thought which for the last quarter of a century has ac-

linking them up together, thereby will have nothing to do with the impulses of passion and emotion; for sentiment, in

appeals to the reader's collaboration, demanding from him a very intense effort of combination and mental synthesis; therefore, the faculties which it calls into play are primarily constructive. Through an indirect course, it thus eventually falls back upon the purposes of classicism, because the latter's

could have been expected, as soon as we took into account the gradual mingling of characteristics, and the interpenetration of periods. The breaking up of the traditional moulds of

pragmatist age, incapable of charming away, so as to give itself up to constructive reason, the spells of the concrete and the intuitive, with which the Romantic revelation has enriched the modern *sense of things*. That paradoxical complexity would thus, more clearly than ever, point to the mingling of tendencies, to their being hoarded up in consciousness into so complete a treasure, and so heavy a burden, that the birth of an untainted

literary period, and the unsophisticated joy of an absolute artistic renovation, would cease to be possible. The very working of the psychological rhythm, and its continued fecundity, would thus be endangered. It would follow thence that the confusion of principles, efforts, and methods in which our age is entangled, was an unavoidable consequence of the thorough saturation of minds. The immediate future of English literature would be conditioned before all by that exhaustion of its untouched resources. The neo-classicism which seems to be preparing in England would be contaminated in its very fountain-head by that intimate fusion of Romantic streams, just as in France the neo-classicism which has defined itself and is gaining the ascendancy proves unable to eliminate the virtue which flows in spite of itself through its veins. Romanticism henceforward would be incurable, and would triumph in the very victories that were won over it.

It is indeed in the light of such reflections that one can best analyse and interpret the works of the new writers who seem to have assumed most significance during the last ten years. A novelist, Charles Morgan,[1] would be among them: his thoughtful manner, his noble meditative idealism, his conscious art and chastened style, point to a highly intellectual aesthetic creed; but his deep sensibility and mystical symbolism are astir with all the emotional searchings of our unsettled time. A clear intelligence and a desperate concentration upon the object, are similarly combined with an inner restlessness, which the tentative form reveals, in the so-called 'modern' poets, the heirs of G. M. Hopkins, W. Owen, and T. S. Eliot.[2] They meet, in fact, on the common ground of zeal; they long for a social order shaped anew according to the desires both of reason and of the heart; and if in that ideal reason demands leadership, if feeling is somewhat suspect and repressed, it is to the heart, in spite of all, that the initiative and the decisive energy belong. So the ironical or haughty intellectualism of to-day is no less an illusion that the anti-intellectualism of yesterday; poetry with Auden, Spender, and Day Lewis is still inseparable, in its ebb and flow, from an inspired ardour, that will at times exalt and sublimate even the complexities and the subtleties of thought. The last of those poets is probably the most genuine; he knows how to cope, through his bold stripped simplicity, through the utter sincerity of his

[1] See above, p. 1359, n. 3.
[2] See above, p. 1291, n., p. 1353, p. 1358.

images born of immediate experience, and the original force of his language, with the demands of a great, incomparable theme—the vision of a liberated world where labour only would be the measure of power. His impassioned, pure utterance, and his innate sense of music, prove able to fuse and unify into art the refractory elements—whether philosophical, technical, cultural, or social—of a civilization that never was more unsettled and jarring[1]

Complexity thus offers art a resource, while it is a foe to genuine renovations, and to unadulterated fresh feelings. The relative stagnancy of the rhythm, which has probably become a permanent trait of English literature, would not prevent the latter from producing still for a long time precious fruits, the more rich in taste as they have been permeated and coloured by more various juices.

And should the secret vitality of this literature be in a way undermined, it would be enough, to render it its full vigour, that it should receive a substantial influx of fresh energy. In several modes, such an influx seems to be at present preparing The life instinct might be at work, and germs be silently awaking, in the pessimism of these anxious years.

A first mode would be that of social changes deep enough to rejuvenate in a large measure the instincts from which the national culture draws its being. The lower classes more or less partake in the intellectual evolution of society, and so in the intermingling of tendencies; however, they remain the reservoir of virgin sensibilities and intact forces. English literature, like the French, mostly lives by the inflow of sap from the people. Recent influences—the much wider spread of teaching, the freer access of the many to knowledge, the social rehabilitation of the schoolmaster—are extending the field in which an elementary education allows latent gifts to grow conscious, without exhausting them in advance The

[1] W. H. Auden, born in 1907 *Poems*, new ed , 1933, *Selected Poems*, 1938; *New Year Letter*, 1941, a dramatist *The Dance of Death*, 1933, etc. S Spender, born in 1909; *Poems*, new ed , 1935, a critic and theorist. *The Destructive Element*, 1935, *Poems and Visions*, 1942, etc. C Day Lewis, born in 1904, *Collected Poems, 1929–1933* (including *The Magnetic Mountain*), 1935, *Overtures to Death*, 1938; *Poems in War Time*, 1941; a critic and theorist *A Hope for Poetry*, 1934, *Word over All*, 1943, a novelist *Starting Point*, 1937 For the so-called 'modern' literature as a whole (poetry, the novel, drama, criticism, etc), see *An Anthology of the Last Forty Years*, ed by R L Megroz, 1936, *Modern Poetry, 1922–1934*, ed by M Wollman, 1934, *The Modern Muse*, etc , pub. by the English Association, 1934, and G Bullough, *The Trend of Modern Poetry*, 1934; B Deutsch, *This Modern Poetry*, 1935; M Gilkes, *A Key to Modern Poetry*, 1937; R. L. Mégroz, *Modern English Poetry, 1882–1932*, 1933; H Read, *Form in Modern Poetry*, 1932, J Sparrow, *Sense and Poetry*, 1934

number of the writers who are sons of the people is notably on the increase; there is being created an intellectual proletariat, in which are more broadly merging the modest representatives of the professional class, along with erratic units from the various trades and from life. Moreover, the great advance of the workmen in political experience and moral maturity is adding numerous and robust elements to that reserve stock of temperaments less weakened vitally, in which talent may grow. The prospect of a rapid development of English democracy towards an economic structure, and the possibility of a society in which labour would be the controlling principle of organization, vaguely open the perspective of a literature no doubt less refined, but to a large extent cured of the illness of its opulent old age. The People's Theatre, the pageants, the works of such writers as William Henry Davies, David Herbert Lawrence, S. Spender, W. H. Auden, C. Day Lewis, as also those of Carpenter, in various ways lend some plausibility to this conjecture.

On the other hand, changes may be introduced into the collective mind of the British people from the outside; or rather, this mind may be modified by its contact with forces which, acting from the external world, efficiently stimulate its latent powers. To this order belong, first, foreign influences. On the whole, the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and the first quarter of the twentieth, have been in England a period of increased receptivity, in which the country's inner divergencies have allowed it to feel wider sympathies, and to assimilate more freely. The radiating example of France chiefly, then of Scandinavia, of Russia, has given a definite aim to many confused artistic impulses, from the first relaxing of Victorian discipline to the time of the War. At the present day, the English mind is not impervious to influences; but it does not feel any single one with abnormal intensity; in its disquietude it does not seem to find in any a stimulus sufficient to popularize its scattered energies, and to create a decisive magnetism. Or rather, if it can at all receive such an impulse, it is not from the literature and thought of this or that people, but from the powerful and manifold suggestion of the whole human world.

A limitless contact with the variety of the earth and of races, and the internationalism of imagination, seem to be at the present time the main ways through which the imperious need of a psychological renewal is seeking satisfaction in England.

letters might be even now discovered in the Dominions, where it is assuming an actual reality. Whatever may be in the time to come the spiritual relationship of the daughter nations to the mother country, the youth of the former is not an absolute anodyne to the anxious maturity of the latter. Besides, the moral unity of the Dominions consists before all, to-day, in their common connection with the centre from which … ould ever this connec … f the original focus, … scattered all through the world; there would no longer be any English literature.

But nothing points to the extinction of that focus; and one of the ways in which its vitality is maintained, is just that it is beginning to strengthen its rays with those of the distant fires which it has itself lighted. The literary exploitation of the Empire is the most superficial aspect of this fusion. The British colonies are offering themes to English writers; an exoticism of the Empire is developing; but the colonies are as well giving writers to England. Kipling was the most illustrious representative of a group whose number is growing. The exchanges of subjects, of influences, and of human capital between the Dominions and the mother country, are still very active; and the latter receives to-day no less than she gives.

However vast the Empire may be, the psychological expansion of England is not confined to it. All the oceans are included within the moral domain of the curiosity, the initiative, and the energy of a people of sailors and merchants. The literature of the sea is properly English, and Joseph Conrad dedicated his talent in homage to his adoptive fatherland.

…

of all kinds, feed on the living images of the originality of all climates, all horizons, all manners. This invasion of the earth

people to foreign things, is only derived from the mere will to live; if that exploration of the earth is an attenuated, indirect, and as it were repressed form of political or commercial annexation, there could not be in the process any fruitful psychological initiative, either for one people or for mankind. The rival cultures will follow English culture in that field; they have already followed it there; indeed, they had preceded it. The diffusion of French literature, for one, is of older standing; it acts more largely, again, through its intrinsic merits, and is less kept to the ways laid out by colonization and commerce. This diffusion, it is true, is different. French literature gives itself, rather than it assimilates, and feeds on what it touches. The French mind, though more homogeneous and organized, has opened itself for the last two centuries to many influences; it is, however, less attentively, less widely in contact with the realities and the problems of the world.

The cosmopolitan curiosity of England is still bound by its origins with the traditions of British imperialism; it continues certain habits, certain acts, which are part and parcel of those traditions; it is, so to say, a reflex expression of them. As such, it gives vent to a national egoism, and clashes with other egoisms. A conflict of this kind has been till now a characteristic, if not a condition, of the life of peoples; for this very reason, one would hardly expect to find there an instinct of moral renovation at work.

But the intellectual activities are those in which is concentrated the idealism which springs, with slow gradual effort, from the practical decisions of human groups. There is a germ of disinterestedness in that form of English expansion. It is akin to the sincere humanitarianism of enlightened opinion, to the desire for a more equitable justice among peoples; it is closely related to the sympathy which welcomes the half-realized hope of a league of nations. In the intercourse between the mother country and the Dominions, it has brought about the relaxing of political bonds, and the development of the Empire towards a liberal commonwealth. It seems as if by trying to make itself as broad as the earth, as varied as the races and civilizations of men, the English genius were obscurely attempting to create in itself that all-embracing unity, which the movement of thought and desire, and the pressure of material necessities, agree in pointing out as the goal of the human march onward.

On this higher plane, the conflict of a culture with the others

above such an attempt. The universality which it seems to seek is that of knowledge, of acceptance, and does not exclude parallel universalities of the same kind. Wholly ideal, the possession which it claims clashes with no sovereignty, either of the body or of the mind. What seems to dawn in this instinctive effort, is the dim sense of the reconciliation which the future will perhaps realize between nationalities, limited and mutually exclusive psychological systems, and the internationalism of the commonalty of man.

op
on
direction which civilization, it seems, tends to follow, the English genius shows a vitality still supple, and capable of adaptations. If literary and artistic forms can bear without
r mental
cycle of
increase
the range of one's personality is not to renounce it. The national quality of a mind, of a literature, is not lost in that effort to embrace, without selfishly absorbing them, the material and moral realities which the universe demands that we tolerate. On the contrary, it seems as if the gradual ripening of modern English thought had allowed it to realize itself better and more fully; as if the original nationality of England had gained thus in many-sidedness and in depth. The complexity which is now created by the inevitable mingling of tendencies is, no doubt, here as elsewhere, the means of a more penetrating reflection, of a superior and perhaps unexceptionable intellectualism, whose supple working tends to resemble the intuitive play of consciousness, so

bound; in the human sympathy which counteracts the force—it once was the harshness—of its character and the

insularity of its horizons. The secular treasure of beauty which it preserves and ever increases owes to that inner progress of the British soul a softer and a more winning radiance.[1]

To be consulted: J. Agate, *The Contemporary Theatre*, 1925; E. A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel*, vol. ix, 1938; F. W. Chandler, *Aspects of Modern Drama*, 1916; A. Chevalley, *Le Roman anglais de notre temps*, 1921; J. W. Cunliffe, *English Literature during the Last Half-Century*, 1920; idem, *Modern English Playwrights*, 1927; D. Daiches, *The Novel and the Modern World*, 1940; B. Dobrée, *Modern Prose Style*, 1934; B. Fehr, *Die englische Literatur des 19 und 20 Jahrhunderts*, 1923; H. T. and W. Follett, *Some Modern Novelists*, 1918; W. L. George, *A Novelist on Novels*, 1918; M. Gilkes, *A Key to Modern English Poetry*, 1937; D. M. Hoare, *Some Studies in the Modern Novel*, 1938; Glenn Hughes, *Imagism and the Imagists*, 1931; M. S. Jameson, *Modern Drama in Europe*, 1920; R. Brimley Johnson, *Some Contemporary Novelists (Women)*, 1920; idem (*Men*), 1922; R. Lalou, *Panorama de la littérature anglaise contemporaine*, 1927; L. M. Lindsay, *Modern Scottish Poetry, 1920–1945*, 1946; J. M. Manly and E. Rickert, *Contemporary British Literature*, 1929; third edition, revised by F. B. Millett, 1935; H. Monro, *Some Contemporary Poets*, 1920; idem, *Twentieth Century Poetry, an Anthology*, 1930; A. E. Morgan, *Tendencies of Modern English Drama*, 1924; E. Muir, *Transition*, 1926; Sir H. Newbolt, *A New Study of English Poetry*, 1917; W. M. Parker, *Modern Scottish Writers*, 1917; W. L. Phelps, *The Advance of English Poetry in the Twentieth Century*, 1918; idem, *The Twentieth Century Theatre*, 1919; annual reviews of English poetry, dramas, and novels in the *Revue germanique*, 1910–14, 1920–3; M. C. Sturgeon, *Studies of Contemporary Poets*, 1916; F. Vernon, *The Twentieth Century Theatre*, 1924; M. O. Wilkinson, *New Voices*, 1919; H. Williams, *Modern English Writers*, 1920; W. B. Yeats, *The Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, 1935.

---

[1] An aspect of the literary individualism described above (Chap. V, sect. 1) is the revival of the essay, which since R. L. Stevenson has returned to its former tradition, and freed itself from the somewhat impersonal dignity in which the influence of the leading reviews had confined it in the period 1830–1870. At the present day it is an unfettered, infinitely supple expression of the most various temperaments. Many of the novelists, poets, critics, etc., of the contemporary age would deserve a special mention as essay-writers. To the already quoted names of Max Beerbohm, H. Belloc, A. Clutton-Brock, R. Le Gallienne, Mrs. Meynell, etc., should here be added, whether among the living or the recently departed, those of A. Birrell, A. Dobson, Havelock Ellis, Sir James Frazer (*Sir Roger de Coverley, etc.*, 1920; eminent historian of religions), Andrew Lang, Vernon Lee (Violet Paget), E. V. Lucas, J. Middleton Murry, G. S. Street, etc. See *Modern English Essays, 1870–1920*, 1923; *Selected Modern English Essays*, by H. Milford, 1925.

POSTSCRIPT

AFTER-WAR TENDENCIES

THE impact of the world war on an English cultural life already disturbed by the social and economic upheavals referred to on pages 1371–2, resulted at first in a short period of confusion—and silence among the established writers. The problem was for poets, novelists, and philosophers to learn to ride the whirlwind. They failed, as the first impact struck them, and threw down most normal social landmarks Even the physical mechanics of life were disorganized, with the result of a temporary arrest of the technical side of the literary world.

ities of
of the
sumed,
to meet the astonishing increase in the demand for reading matter from a public denied all other sources of pleasure, interest, and consolation.

fully engaged in national service.

So with both veterans and novices in the literary world reduced to silence, there resulted a vacuum which had to be filled. That reaction was a gradual process. First the older novelists began to work again, finding to their surprise that a still larger reading public welcomed fiction built to a traditional pattern. Somerset Maugham, Frank Swinnerton, Compton Mackenzie, are outstanding examples of novelists of an older generation who, during the war, continued to work and thereby to link the restless, *inter bellum* decades to the years of the great agony, and thus to offer some degree of calmness and detachment, elements that later might be used in a historical way to bridge the chasm over to the future years of peace.

The public accepted such work avidly, while also returning

to the classics. Cheap editions of Dickens, the Bro Austen, and, above all, Anthony Trollope, were overnight, faster than the publishing houses cou them. Further, it appeared that wartime conditio life were leading to much more serious reading. P. history and current events, technology and scie were all subjects in popular demand. There appea form of book, really journalism in covers, by wl mentators and observers of the wartime scene all world educated the British people in the trend a ficance of these events in which they were playing s part. Reputations were made, and inflated, by b dealt in sensational, pseudo-philosophical, political, statistical ways with the passing war scene.

Meanwhile that scene was influencing the main s English letters. It shaped no outstanding novelist. continued to flourish in a routine way, remaining p in the hands of those established novelists who wer for active service or war work. Here and there a voice was heard. Elizabeth Myers, with a first nov *A Well Full of Leaves*, gave a lyrical, poetic freshness a talent either naïve or deliberately primitive in i consciousness. She followed this success with a peri on the life of Jonathan Swift, and a third novel cal *Christopher* (in 1946), in which the early lyrical qua strengthened by dramatic form and a maturer depth o

Rumer Godden, whose *Breakfast with the Nikolides River* are her most characteristic books, has been ren for her extraordinary sensibility in the portrayal of children brought up in an incongruous Indian envir

Mary Lavin, with three volumes of short stories novel, has been the sole reminder from a neutral Irela the standard of work in fiction set by Frank O'Con Sean O'Faolain has not been lost. Her stories have a quality, with prose heightened through local idiom musical form familiarized by J. M. Synge.

Elizabeth Taylor, with two novels, *At Mrs. Lip* and *Palladian*, is a young novelist writing within the t a pleasing sophistication, her prose lucid, her stream sciousness graduated by the measure standardized by Woolf.

The death of Virginia Woolf during the war left El Bowen as the only women ...

Both are aristocrats of taste, possessing grace and strength in urbanity.

None of these women writers, however, has reflected directly the political and social chaos, the break-up of tradition in class and cultural values, the conflicting upheavals of ethical, moral, religious, and scientific speculation, which have marked the war years and those of the aftermath.

[illegible]

nineteen-twenties

There is evidence that these three voices have not been crying in the wilderness. While the young writers of the pre-war decade turned to Eliot alone as a monitor, the still younger generation, which is to supply the spokesmen directing the rebuilding of a shattered society, has found in all three poet-critics material to feed their purpose.

That purpose is to state afresh the sanctity of the individual spirit, and to demand sufficient freedom within the needs of society, for that sanctity to be both preserved and utilized Some critics may see in this purpose, concisely stated by a definite body of the post-war writers, a manifestation of the tryst between neo-classicism and romanticism foreseen on page 1370 of this book. During and since the war a field of [illegible] even-year night [illegible] oung men and [illegible] ld find no other [illegible] of a faith and [illegible] overlaid by the new barbarism of the machine age and its crowning act of world war. Such periodicals need not be named here. By

their nature most of them have been short-lived; but have enabled young poets, essayists, and critics to cont from the Forces and from civilian life scattered by the all quarters of the globe, a protocol of their reaction to th and often terrible experience into which the writers hav plunged. And that protocol has gradually taken the sh a resolution; youthful, naïve, but strong and based on a hand knowledge of the elemental. These young writers stared at death, famine, disease, exile. They have c deserts and fought their way up mountain passes. have seen the destruction of many of the monume European culture, and the total collapse of civic life in rooted in the tradition of Greece and Rome. They have home determined to raise their voices against ever which they believe will stand in the way of a rebuild human society. Some of them cry out against all ide Some have embraced the Catholic faith, others the Comm The conflict of voices and of views is not yet determine is it likely to be for some decades to come, while the eco balance of the world is still unsure. Most of these new lack talent, and contribute nothing individual to E letters. Some are already distinguishable. Rex W with his novels, *The Professor*, *The Wild Goose Chase*, *Was I Killed?* and *The Aerodrome*, and his book of e *The Cult of Power*, combines originality of temperamen a strong bent towards classical discipline. He revolts a the recent cult of obscurity in form and diction (that cular disease of the pre-war years). A Greek scholar, learned to be lucid. With this technique, he has experim in allegorical forms, and in a deliberate symbolism, remin of the work of Kafka. But he is more tangible, more in tradition, more sane, than the Czech writer. There Attic serenity in his work, a light which appears to be g him through the cloud and smoke still rising from the of the war-stricken world.

Alex Comfort, a young doctor, prolific in pamphle angry outcries against the clumsy intrusion of politicia profiteer into the European sick-room, where the p awaits expert diagnosis and surgery, has written ve which the influence of Rilke is again apparent. Two n *The Almond Tree* and *The Power House*, show Mr. Comfo writer using this vehicle for a poetic purpose in the firs a social purpose in the second. *The Power House* is a

bitious work deliberately moulded in the Zola manner, its

that Alex Comfort may possess, with R. C. Hutchinson, the right creative power to add a permanent contribution to English fiction of the reconstruction era. During the war Hutchinson published only one short romance, called *Interim* It showed the remarkable imaginative force of his earlier books, *Shining Scabbard* and *Testament*, but, as it were, in suspense.

that of his earlier books, *The Lemon Farm*, *Night of the Party*, *Nuns in Jeopardy*, and the autobiography, *A Single Flame*.

quality in their work; a marmoreal remoteness, a nostalgia as though they were gazing upon distant snow peaks, and interpreting the vision in symbols of an impossible perfectibility.

The war affected one young writer in a different way, by making him even more prolific. In 1939 H. E. Bates had

brought his earlier work to a much larger public, while ensuring the success of his subsequent books, *Fair Stood the Wind for France* and *The Cruise of the Breadwinner*. These two stories show a novelist technically equipped to portray

whatever may be forthcoming in the Europe of to-morrow, provided that he retains also the sensibility shown in his earlier work.

The countryman in H. E. Bates might have been enough to ensure an increase in his popularity, for one of the most pronounced developments of public taste during and after the war was the almost passionate interest in books about outdoor life. Sir William Beach Thomas, V. Sackville-West, H. J. Massingham, C. Henry Warren, Richard Church, G. S. Street, Fred Kitchen, may be named as representative of the many who, in prose or verse, supplied this demand.

Finally, a reference must be made, as a pointer, to the paths that the younger poets appear to be taking. How many, still inglorious, have been muted in death during the war will never be known. A few contrived to utter promissary music before they disappeared. Foremost among these were Alun Lewis and Sidney Keyes. The latter was killed at the age of twenty-one. His *Collected Poems*, the contents of two thin volumes, with a few additional poems, have securely established his name. He stands in a niche in the house of fame. His verse is prematurely rich in historical consciousness. The past seems to have been as close and personal to him as the present. His rapid characterization, his concrete images, his dramatic gesture, gave promise—and indeed performance—of a poet endowed with a Keats-like fervour of spirit. Alun Lewis, a few years older, was calmer, more interfused with daily life and domestic emotions. He had great tenderness of feeling, and a sincerity that crept into the reader's heart, and nestled there.

These, and poets a few years older, such as Dylan Thomas (an English Rimbaud), Clifford Dyment, Hal Summers, A. L. Rowse (also a distinguished historian), George Barker, Louis MacNeice, Henry Reed, Norman Nicholson, David Gascoyne, A. S. J. Tessimond, Stephen Spender, John Pudney, Patric Dickinson, all point to the fact that an interpolatory chapter in English poetry has been closed. Their work is rich with restored humility. Tradition shapes it into welcome musical forms. The abnormalities of inter-war verse have been lost in the cataclysm, and we find the poets now possessed of a purity of tone, and a courage for prophecy, that have yet to be justified by events. Their song is like that of the larks, which soar to heights where they can see and hymn the sun before it has risen over an earth still in darkness.

INDEX

This index contains the names of the writers referred to in the text. It does not include the critics, commentators, and editors who figure in the notes, nor (with a few exceptions) the historical personages mentioned in the course of the work

INDEX